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31/10/19

Dear Sir,

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th inst. in relation to the above matter. The same has been forwarded to the appropriate authorities for their consideration. I am sorry to hear that you are having difficulties with the project. I am sure that the authorities will be able to assist you in some way. I will be in touch with you again once a decision has been reached. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours faithfully,
[Signature]

SALVAGE.



CHAPTER I.

AT THE DOOR OF GOOD FORTUNE.

But now the dream is wholly o'er,
I bathe mine eyes and see,
And wander through the world once more
A youth so light and free.

H. W. LONGFELLOW, from PFIZER.

IT was the middle of a night in June, or rather in the very earliest hours of a morning in the full height of the London season, that two young men ran down the steps of a handsome house near Eaton Square. This house was the residence of the American Minister, whose private means, fortunately, were sufficient to make up the deficiencies of republican liberality, and enable him to extend to all comers that hospitality which the American considers his due from his country's representatives abroad, wherever found.

Our young men were in evening dress. One was tall and dark, with a superb full beard; the other, much slighter in frame, wore the look of a man wonted to society and to London ways.

Both had cigars between their fingers ; that of the younger man was already lit, and he gave a light to his companion as soon as they found themselves in the street.

“Are you bound for your lodgings, Colonel Wolcott?” asked the younger man.

“Indeed I am,” replied the colonel, laughing. “I am not habituated to London hours as yet, though I shall be broken in soon as a matter of course and find them all right, as I did rising before daybreak all right in the East.”

“You are fortunate in coming to London just when you did,” said his companion. “There is nothing in the world more delightful than the life you are likely to lead for the next six months. Your book has made a hit in the fashionable and literary circles which will ensure you a successful season in town, and that will be followed by another round of engagements in the country during the shooting and hunting seasons ; or, if too much lionizing proves a bore, you can break away at any moment and take a run across the channel. Indeed, that is one of the good things of being in England. You are certainly a lucky fellow, Colonel. Here you wake up one fine morning and find yourself famous in a certain way, and that at the beginning of the season, too, in the very heart of the civilized world. I hope you realize your good fortune.”

The other laughed. It was rather a forced laugh at first, but as it continued it became more natural.

"It is no use for me to sham indifference," he said, "for truly I am very much gratified at my little success. The position is wholly unexpected. It is what cultivated Americans all dream of as about the best thing that can happen to anybody. A trip to Europe is the great holiday of our lives, you know; the hope of it sustains us through the toil and moil of business, which from fifteen to thirty-five gives most of us few chances of pleasure. For an obscure American like myself to find himself a lion, even in a small way, in the best—I mean the best *literary*—English society is very like what popularity would be to a classic author permitted to return to earth and enjoy his fame; and I have had too few of this world's good things in my day not to enjoy it thoroughly. Even the snobbish side of it is entertaining. Why, there was a fellow at my lodgings this morning before I was out of bed,—a reporter, or whatever you call a man who collects artistic matter for the illustrated papers,—to get my photograph for 'The Illustration.' I felt the compliment to my beard too much to deny him, only I am afraid my complaisance did not do him much service; for I told the maid who

knocked at my door to give him a *carte de visite* from the mantel-piece of my sitting-room, and I have a strong impression that she mistook and got hold of the likeness of an old general of mine, now serving the Khedive, whom I stopped at Cairo to see on my way from Constantinople to Malta."

He paused a moment, and went on : —

"It is another of the strange new things that crowd upon me to find myself so kindly received by all of you at the Legation. When I quitted civilization, just after the fall of our Confederacy, Uncle Sam was my worst enemy : at the end of five years I find myself restored to his protection and honored with the consideration of his representatives abroad. It gives me a queer sense of having outlived my former self, and of being on a visit to posterity. To others the changes of the past five years have been gradual, but to me they have been unsoftened even by newspaper intelligence. To become conscious of a feeling of security under the old flag is a surprise indeed to me. I was astonished by a throb of old-time feeling when, in the harbor of Constantinople, I recognized the Stripes and Stars. There is nothing like five years of exile in the East to revive one's love of country."

"The old hatreds are subsiding," said the Secretary of Legation, "subsiding, that is to

say, as fast as politicians and reconstructionists will permit. Americans certainly are the most wonderful people in the world for accepting the inevitable. We are educated to it. Ours is a land of fever and ague in politics, Colonel Wolcott,—of hot fits succeeded by cold chills. But prosperity and peace are springing up finely in Georgia, your own State. By the way, I was surprised the other day to see that Georgia has exactly the same acreage as England. It is five years, is it not, since Lee's surrender? I admit that more ought to have been done politically to settle our vexed questions; but so far as social feeling is concerned, I believe all bitterness at the North has passed away."

"You mean to hint that the South is not so placable? I presume not. But then it was the seat of war. Would the non-combatants of Massachusetts be able, do you think, to feel kindly towards Southern troopers, stragglers, bummers, and camp-followers, who had chopped up their fruit-trees, laid waste their fields and gardens, scattered their families, burned down their homesteads, and overturned the very foundations of their social customs?—However, that is not what we were talking about."

"No; and here we are at the door of your lodgings. Shall I come to-morrow morning

and take you to see some of the sights of London?"

"Thanks, but to-morrow — *this* morning, I mean, — I am to breakfast with my publisher, who has asked a lot of literary men and travellers to meet me, — members of the Geographical Society, the Asiatic, and the Travellers' Club. I look forward with great pleasure to seeing these men, whose very names have been full of associations and interest to me for years."

"Well, I can only repeat that you are a fortunate fellow, and I envy you the frank spirit in which you accept your popularity even more than I do your literary position, though that might gratify any man. Your travels out only six weeks, three editions already called for! reviews in the Times and the Quarterlies, and all flattering! A man without family incumbrances too. Well, you have the ball at your feet — and it will be pleasant to watch you kick it. Good night and *bon repos!*"

Colonel Wolcott ran lightly up the stairs to his sitting-room, where a lamp was dimly burning in expectation of his arrival.

"Yes, I *am* a lucky fellow!" he exclaimed, as he entered his apartment. "I am fortunate indeed to have no ties, no responsibilities, no drawbacks to my thorough enjoyment of this bright streak of prosperity."

“‘A youth, light-hearted and content,
I wander through the world;
Here, Arab-like, is pitched my tent,
And straight again is furled.’”

The quotation seemed to call up some saddening reminiscences. He did not go on to the next verse about the “two locks” of hair, but, with a passing gesture of impatience and discomfiture, turned up the lamp, and made a sudden brightness in the chamber. On the table, underneath the lamp, lay a thick letter.

“Ah!” he said, looking at the cover, “what is it now, I wonder?”

He broke the seal, and read:—

“DEAR SIR,—I forgot, this morning, when I had the pleasure of seeing you, that some letters for you had come addressed to our care. I forward them with apologies. I have secured Murchison, Layard, Kinglake, and the rest, for our breakfast to-morrow morning. Sir Roderick will afterwards introduce you at the ‘Travellers’ and the Oriental.’ Nothing must prevent your coming. We shall breakfast at sharp ten.

“Yours truly,

“—— ———.”

“Be quite easy, my dear sir, *nothing shall* prevent my coming,” remarked Colonel Wolcott aloud. “My travels in the steps of Marco Polo make me more anxious to see Sir Roderick Mur-

chison than any other living man. I wonder if he agrees with my theory about the old bed of the Oxus? Letters from America! Alas! I have friends there no longer. I propose to begin a new life, and to make new friends and a new future. Let me see, from my mother's lawyer in New York. Ha! I know what he writes about. I hope he can manage it."

"NEW YORK, April 10, 1870.

"MY DEAR COLONEL WOLCOTT, — Permit me to express the high gratification it was to us to receive yours from Constantinople, dated the 9th of March, after a total silence of so many eventful years. We have noted the contents of your communication, and believe that by proper application to the courts of the State of Indiana the thing you desire can be very easily accomplished. We will set about it at once, and a few weeks may relieve you. You gave us no address, so that I direct my letter to your London publisher. Allow me to congratulate you as an author and a traveller — nothing like it since Eöthen.

"Your most obedient,

"ROBERT S. DEANE."

"So far, so good," said Colonel Wolcott, and took up the second letter.

"NEW YORK, May 4, 1870.

"MY DEAR COLONEL, — In pursuance of the

business intrusted to our firm in your favor of March 9, from Constantinople, I have called on Mr. Engels, — Mrs. Wolcott's father, — and have informed him that we desire to avail ourselves, with as little delay as possible, of the well-known facilities for divorce offered by the laws of Indiana. I represented to him that as you had lived apart from Mrs. Wolcott for nine years, neither party holding any communication during that time with the other, there could be no difficulty in dissolving your union on the ground of desertion. I suggested that it might be more speedy and satisfactory if, on his daughter's part, *he* should bring suit, and so join us in an amicable arrangement for the dissolution of the marriage. He expresses his entire willingness to do so, provided Mrs. Wolcott be permitted to retain the child . . . ”

“Child!” exclaimed Colonel Wolcott. “What child? *My* child? *I* the father of a child? I never heard of any child! What can the man be thinking of? Why have I never heard of it before? Why did she never send me word I had a child?”

He flung himself back in his chair, still holding the lawyer's letter.

“True — true,” he said at last, “during the war I got no letters. I left her suddenly. I had borne everything from her and from her

friends which a man is bound to bear. I was driven to leave her. She said nothing to me of her situation, but it may have been so. The child must have been born while I was in Alabama, and when the war was over I went at once abroad. I wrote her father word that I was going to the East, and got no answer. To be sure, answer was not easy. Even the news of my poor mother's death reached me at second hand. It was a difficult matter even for loving wives, during our war, to communicate with their husbands in the Confederacy, and she—Well, I never wrote to her, that is true. But a *child*!—it seems incredible. A child would alter everything. Son or daughter, did he say? . . . ”

“He expresses his entire willingness to do so, provided Mrs. Wolcott be permitted to retain the child, from whom nothing, he was sure, would prevail on her to part. I told him that the child being already more than seven years of age, the father is its legal guardian, but that after the divorce, if proceedings had been satisfactory, it was probable some arrangement might be made by us to meet their wishes. We will therefore see Mrs. Wolcott's lawyer, and hurry on the suit, leaving you to advise us further on this point as you think proper. Old Mr. Engels hinted an intention of amply providing for his grandson, and

even of settling an annuity upon yourself, should you waive all claim to the child's custody."

"The bargaining Yankee!" exclaimed Colonel Wolcott, starting from his chair. "Does he think his dirty Northern dollars can buy from a Southern gentleman his own flesh and blood? It is a boy, then! His grandson! My boy—my own boy! He is more than eight years old, and they have never let me hear a word about him. I—his own father! And I do not even know his name! I never heard of him before!"

He flung open the window in strong excitement, and leaned out to catch a breath of morning air. As he did so his ear caught the hum that in a mighty city precedes the dawn. In London streets there is one hour of night to twenty-three of day. Colonel Wolcott turned from the open window, and paced up and down his sitting-room, with a tempest raging in his bosom.

As he walked, the circumstances of his life rose up before him.

CHAPTER II.

UNADVISEDLY AND LIGHTLY.

What's become of Waring
Since he gave us all the slip?
Chose land-travel or sea-faring,
Boots and chest, or staff and scrip,
Rather than pace up and down
Any longer London town?

ROBERT BROWNING.

HE saw himself a little boy upon a Georgia farm, playing in the woods with many dogs and many little darkies. He was an autocrat among his playfellows, but an autocrat whose sway was tempered by nature into a very endurable despotism.

He remembered himself in the woods upon a summer's day with Harry, Cato, Jefferson, 'Lias, Melchisedeck, and James Buchanan, when a slow procession came wending through the trees up to the mansion. An old mauma, wiping her eyes, came to fetch him to the house. In the great hall he found relatives and friends, who had brought his father home, wounded to death in a duel. In less than an hour after the child was summoned from his play, the tragedy was over.

The shock of that moment he could feel still. It would go with him to the last hour of his life, burnt into memory as with a fiery brand.

Next he saw himself bidding a sad and long farewell to the home of his childhood, the stronghold of his Southern pride. His mother had been a Northern beauty, wooed and won at one of the Virginia springs. She hated the seclusion of Southern country life, though she liked well enough the importance of owning a large plantation. On her husband's death she purchased a pretty place on the North River, living there, or at Newport, during the summer months, and passing the winters usually at a New York hotel or fashionable boarding-house.

He saw himself at school,—a school which brought him under better influences than did his mother's intimates. He saw himself a half-grown lad upon the lawn of his own Southern home, under the live oaks, draped with hanging moss, during such happy brief vacations as he was permitted to pass upon the old plantation. There lived the uncle and cousins who were allowed to reside, rent free, in the old homestead; there was his blooded riding mare, his favorite gun, the dogs who hailed his holiday with wild delight, the dusky faces lingering round the porch, the boys, who looked upon his stay as a perpetual Whitsuntide. The cousins worshipped him; his uncle

deferred to him ; his dogs and dependants fawned upon him. Education, means, experience, acquirements, and position gave the boy a weight far greater than any to which he was entitled from his years in that simple-hearted, primitive, hero-worshipping society. Lancelot Wolcott's memory dwelt tenderly upon his Southern home, and his hand clenched and his brow darkened as he thought of his property laid waste, his horses requisitioned, his dogs masterless. He remembered, with a thrill of anger and bitterness, his last sight of the charred ruins of his homestead,—a black blot on the green landscape, marking the swathe of Sherman's mighty scythe.

Again the *tableau* shifted, and he was at Bonn, whither his mother had taken him when he was seventeen. There, with the German language, he had learned German notions,—a little rationalism, a little materialism, something of the German Protestant ideas of loose obligations in marriage. He had imbibed these things unconsciously, yet they formed an important part of that substructure of impressions,—the “gold or silver, wood, hay, stubble,” of ideas and principles, which we collect to build our future lives upon.

Then his thoughts shifted to Newport. He was riding on horseback over the lovely curving

Second Beach, in days when fashion still encouraged horseback exercise on the long stretches of those glorious sands. Beside him rode Cora Noble, faultless in beauty and equestrian equipment. Again he felt his heart beat as she floated with him through the waltz, or coquetted in the mazes of the German; again she trusted to his strong arm in the under-tow, and let him battle (with that arm round her waist) the stringent force of the receding tide; again he led her from the surf over wet shingle to one of those unpainted pine-board boxes which they call "bathing houses" on the Newport beach.

He recalled the sudden shock with which he learned one day of her engagement to an elderly New York banker, and the moment when, in her cool seaside drawing-room, he sat in the half-light thrown by the summer sunshine through green blinds, waiting to hear his fate—to lose or win her.

He saw her enter, in a fresh and faultless robe of crispest frills and flounces, and take a seat near him. Again he pleaded his deep love, his long devotion: and she answered calmly that his foreign education had given him no insight into the social necessities of American society; that an American girl, being *chaperon* to herself, could not be blamed for tentative efforts to find out who might best suit her as a husband; that,

as guardian of her own interests, she was bound to look out for the best possible match, and that she sincerely regretted if anything in her manner had given rise to hopes which she had never supposed him seriously to expect her to fulfil.

That night he left Newport on a fishing expedition. To the day of his death he would remember the awful loneliness of the Isles of Shoals, where he stayed a week. The blow was a severe one,—all the more that it “came not as a single spy,” but followed by battalions. His pecuniary affairs, just at this time, proved out of joint. The Wolcott estate had never been properly divided. A black storm was gathering on the political horizon, which alarmed all holders of Southern property, and “great stirring of heart” was felt amongst those to whom the Southern States were dear.

The accounts laid before Lancelot Wolcott, about a year after his coming of age, were by no means satisfactory. His mother had been extravagant, their agents incompetent, his uncle supine. In the bitterness of his heart, he was forced to tell himself that the mercenary beauty who had thrown him over had done wisely.

“Perhaps,” he exclaimed, “in her capacity of *chaperon* and guardian to herself, she may have already satisfied her own mind by private inquiry as to my ‘means,’ or the want of them.”

Who knows? Women of that stamp are very wise in their generation, and capable of calm, keen management of their own interests, untroubled by superfluous delicacy.

When Lancelot reappeared at his mother's cottage on the North River, the cause of his ill looks required no conjecture. Every gossip in every circle of the federated upper ten cackled to every morning visitor and detailed to every correspondent in "the set" the news that Cora Noble — was n't it too bad of her? — had flung over young Wolcott for old Tontine.

One of the first annoyances that greeted Lancelot Wolcott, when he came back to the world again, was his mother's importunate desire that he should marry, — marry at once, without delay.

Her arguments were varied and cogent. It would be the best way of getting over all feeling about Cora Noble. It was desirable to marry before he had in any way hardened into being a bachelor. It was particularly to be wished that he should choose a rich woman, and so mend the falling fortunes of his family. Why should not rich girls be as charming as poor ones? more so, indeed, for they had full command of those advantages on which many of a well-bred woman's charms depend. In short, Mrs. Wolcott brought her arguments to a point by assuring him that she had found the very match for him in Miss

Adela Engels, only daughter of the very rich old merchant who owned the handsome villa next her own.

"Fresh from school, my dear Lancelot,—an unsophisticated creature! You can mould her into anything you wish. Very pretty, very dutiful, religious, and all that; ready to look up to her 'Sir Lancelot' as a hero. She knows all the things schools ever teach young ladies, and her father is as rich as—well! they say there is nothing to which we can compare old Engels's riches. She is a girl who will have crowds of men after her as soon as she puts her head into society, but she appears to have no taste whatever for fashionable life, and her father and Mrs. Engels are keeping her back,—keeping her for *you*, Lancelot, for I've sounded them, and their views are mine precisely. You may have the first chance, if you please, with this girl. And, my dear son, if you win Adela Engels for your wife, I think I shall ask nothing more to make me happy."

At first Lancelot smiled languidly at these appeals, then he became exasperated to the highest degree by his mother's pertinacity; and he took a dislike to old Mr. Engels, who omitted no possible opportunity of thrusting upon him his unwelcome society.

Adela, absent from home at the moment,

was sent for. Lancelot saw perfectly well, and marked each careful step taken for their introduction to each other. He was languidly amused by the commotion and his mother's vain hopes. They first met at a dinner-party at Woodbine, the Engels's villa, to which his mother made it a matter of especial concern that he should accompany her.

Adela was arrayed in white muslin and blue ribbons,—the very picture of an *ingénue*. He found her unformed, self-conscious, a thorough school-girl, perfectly aware of what her elders were expecting, intrenched behind two giggling comrades of her own age, who looked on Lancelot Wolcott (the most finished man of fashion they had ever seen) as the declared and accepted lover of the great heiress.

Had Lancelot been in spirits, he might have thought it good fun to attack her prudery, and, after overpowering the friends who held the out-works, to approach her by the lines and parallels of scientific flirtation. But he had no heart just then for jesting in any way with young ladies,—no heart even to take flight, no spirit to resist the small machinations of their respective mothers.

Day after day, under the joint manœuvres of both families, he drifted on to the fate prepared for him. He saw enough of Adela to be sure

that she was a thoroughly good girl, unspoiled as yet by any taint of family vulgarity ; he perceived that she was absorbed in a sort of awful admiration of himself, for which he could not but be grateful. She was apparently a *tabula rasa*, upon which might be written anything that suited him. Of his affair with Cora Noble she had somehow learned, for even in boarding-schools the matter had been canvassed and discussed as an interesting item of current gossip ; and he came at last to the point of saying to himself that, as to feel a passion for any woman was thenceforth impossible to him, might it not be well that he should gratify everybody by throwing his handkerchief to this highly eligible and attainable young person ?

Then came a day when, by the river's brink, — very much as Pendennis offered himself to Laura Bell, to take or to fling away, as she thought proper, — he offered himself to Adela. She, poor child, in no wise resembled that self-possessed, complaisant Laura, with theories which she was prepared to carry out at all hazards, — a just consideration for her own importance, experiences with Mr. Pyncent to fall back on, and a predetermined consciousness that the eternal fitness of things destined her to bear rule over her husband. Not at all. Adela was overwhelmed by a sense of the honor and bliss conferred upon her by this noble

suitor. Of course it would be her happiness to obey him, to adore him, to cherish, honor, and, so far as she might be permitted, comfort him for the loss he had sustained in Cora Noble.

She gave herself, therefore, into his keeping, with no misgivings except such as arose from fears that she might prove unworthy of him. Before she slept that night she read that most tender and unrivalled speech of the heiress who weds Bassanio, also Tupper's chapters upon love and marriage, and Mr. Coventry Patmore's "Betrothal." She felt herself in harmony alike with dramatist, proverbial philosopher, and poet, and was as far from thinking that there could be cold, ungenerous Bassanios in the world as that there were critics who could gibe at the poetry of Tupper.

As Colonel Wolcott, more than nine years after, paced his London lodgings, turning over in his mind the *pros* and *cons* of divorce by the laws of Indiana, he felt a moment's tender thrill pass through his heart as he remembered the soft trustfulness with which this girl had given herself to him for life, and her blush of pride and pleasure as he first pressed her to his bosom.

Their engagement was short, and Lancelot Wolcott was absent a good deal of the time. The fuss of preparation annoyed him much, and *tête-à-têtes* with Adela bored him and depressed

him. They left him more disappointed with himself than with her, and yet there was a certain feeling of irritation at her evident satisfaction in the affair and in the love she had won.

She had him fast. Surely, that was enough for her and for her parents. Why must they expect him to address to her the vows that were still sacred to the memory of another? Nor, truth to tell, was Adela fitted for light lovers' chat,—the give and take of happy girls and men who are consciously in love with each other.

Had Lancelot cared for her, their talk would probably have risen to high themes of abstract speculation, to disquisitions upon social science, discussions of ethics, mild metaphysics, or points of feeling; for, strange to say, this kind of conversation is an unerring symptom of a mutual inclination between men and women. The young people who engage in it are feeling their way in the dark towards mutual discoveries; and Adela could have done her part in such grave speculations (on which she had thought much) far better than she did in merely conversational small change, with thoughts which secretly wandered as her sweet, shy fancies shrank back, rebuked at her lover's indifference.

Adela could think, feel, and reason, but neither training nor experience had given her any skill in the battledore-and-shuttlecock of lively con-

versation. She was too much afraid of the exalted Lancelot to let her real tenderness or her timid hopes peep out from under the veiling propriety and decorum of her demeanor.

Still less was Lancelot pleased with the light in which he appeared to be regarded in the Engels family. Mr. and Mrs. Engels hardly seemed to consider him a free agent. Their daughter's sense of his exalted worth did not apparently extend to her family. They failed to recognize that the moment was at hand when rights that they themselves had thrust upon him would become his rightful claim; rather, they regarded him as a sort of steward of their own selection,—worthy and satisfactory, no doubt, but in some subordinate way an appendage and appurtenance to the glories of the Engels connection.

That autumn brought a time of fierce political excitement, and Lancelot gladly absented himself during the wearisome discussions over the *trousseau* and the wedding, feeling that his real interest and destiny lay far more in the results of the election of John Bell or Abraham Lincoln than in matters connected with his marriage. Like the victims who stood quietly to let men gild their horns, be-garland them with flowers, and lead them to the pompous fate prepared for them, he went through one of the most magnificent of tedious weddings,—a wedding whose

mere details, at "the usual rate" per line, furnished many a poor reporter with a supper.

They were married, and set off alone to begin a new existence, to weld their two lives into one, make their far different antecedents coalesce, and fashion unity out of diversity; to combine into strength, disintegrate into indifference, or to harden into hostility, as might happen.

As Nature invents ways for completing her own processes, and provides by natural instincts for the careful cherishing of all things newly born, so has she invented the glamour of "true love" by which to set a wedded couple forward on their road to happiness. They see each other, and they see life, only through this beautifying, glorifying medium. It serves them till their eyes can bear the light; it tides them over quicksands; by its help they walk in cataleptic safety among gins and snares; and by the time it fades, there has sprung up a healthy undergrowth of permanent affection.

In this case, there was no glamour in the husband's eyes, and the young wife soon saw her situation in the dispiriting and chilly morning light of uncompromising reality. She had dreamed a young girl's dreams, she had read in poetry and fiction of the devotion of lovers. She found keen disappointment in her honeymoon. Was it so with every married pair? she

asked herself. Was it true that all romance, all happiness in life, was only a creation of novelists and poets? Did they earn their daily bread, their favor with the public, by trading on the impressibility of inexperienced victims whom poetry and art could mislead?

She was far too proud and sensitive to confess her disappointment or complain of it, but the little loves and charms and coqueties, that were all ready to peep forth had there been sunshine to entice them, ran back into their winter nests, and left her dull and unattractive. She was glad when she got back to New York and to familiar people. Life did not look so chilly and so strange in the shelter of her family circle. She began to receive and to make visits, to display herself as a rich bride; and this still further estranged her husband. He thought her frivolous, contented with mere vulgar gauds and fashionable observances; and each day they drifted more and more widely apart.

Then came secession. Lancelot's heart, empty and bruised by disappointment, began to brood over the news from the far South, though he was not prepared as yet to be an advocate of actual separation. The heart of Adela began to stir within her too, responsive to the traditions in which she had been brought up, and to the feelings of her family.

There were times when Lancelot Wolcott could hardly keep his seat at his father-in-law's table, days when his dependent position galled him past all endurance. Each day he wished himself away, at the South with his own people, free to express his sympathies, free to discuss unsettled points in politics, free to offer his wisdom in council (so long as moderation and forbearance might appear of any use) and then, if need were, to draw his sword.

At last arrived the crisis: the balls that tore the Stars and Stripes at Sumter, the 19th of April in the streets of Baltimore, fell like a lightning-bolt on the country, and with a fierce suddenness rent apart Lancelot Wolcott's relations with his wife and her family.

No blaze of popular fury, since the world began, ever equalled in rapidity and fierceness that which followed the events at Charleston and at Baltimore. In old times, popular excitement took weeks to diffuse itself over a broad area: *this* spread like a prairie-fire, lighted at a thousand points by eager hands; and ardent patriots, both at North and South, started, like Clan Alpine, from the earth, with weapons in their hands.

In the general effervescence, words were said in the presence of Lancelot Wolcott that a far tamer nature would not have endured to hear. In the conjugal chamber even, Adela

herself raised the standard of battle and grew aggressive. In what appeared a holy cause, she dared to measure herself against her husband. The lights she followed showed her wholly in the right, and Lancelot wholly in the wrong. From such safe standing-ground, backed by all history, by the pulpit, by the Word of God as she interpreted it, and by her own surroundings, she dared to discharge some keen shafts of patriotism. He answered with bitterness. To her the dispute was no mere matrimonial jar, in which it might have been her wifely duty to show tenderness to the prejudices of her husband,—no, she was called on as a patriot to lift her voice against treason, treachery, and national suicide, in a tremendous crisis. For the cause of her country, the honor of its flag, she braved domestic discord, felt proud of her own vehemence, and gloried in her excitement and her tears.

The emotion communicated itself to the whole household. All united against the Southern husband, whose temper, irritated and unstrung, was in no condition to bear the assault patiently. The attack ended by Mr. Engels telling him that he had better leave his house; that no man with such sentiments as he avowed was fit company for loyal men, or a fit husband for his daughter.

Lancelot looked at Adela. Her eyes did not

dissent. The fire of his anger and excitement died within him. He rose up, deadly pale.

"I have an engagement," he said, looking at his watch. "I will say good-by to all of you."

Adela was short-sighted. She did not see the expression of his face as he quitted them.

Days passed, and no one heard of him. At last arrived a note to Mr. Engels, dated simply "The left bank of the Potomac:" —

"I have joined my own people. Let my mother know this. Make what arrangements you think proper."

To Adela there was not one word.

Thus stood the case as it now opened itself before him in his London lodgings, five years after the collapse of the Confederacy. Lancelot had fought until the war was over. When the "Lost Cause" was hopelessly lost, he had sailed for Europe, being indeed excluded from pardon by the terms of the first amnesty. He wrote to his mother's lawyer in New York, and, after long delay, received the news of her death. The North River estate had been sold at a great sacrifice, during the worst period of depression, — only a few thousand dollars remained to him. Like another outcast of whom we all have heard, he gathered his substance together and went into a far country. It had always been his ambition to explore the unknown interior of Asia. In his

present mood his heart cried out that better than the convulsions of the New World was the stagnation of Cathay. As a traveller he exhibited striking personal qualities and made some fortunate hits. He succeeded in preserving his journals through various risks and dangers, and, during a forced detention in the mountain fortress of a tribe of Afghan robbers, occupied himself by writing out the narrative of his perils and discoveries. A young Englishman was in his company, and they were released, by British influence, at the same time. The Englishman went back to England, taking with him the MS., which he put into the hands of a great London publisher. It chanced to come out at the right moment and under the right auspices. When Colonel Wolcott (having reached London the night before) woke up on the morning of the day on which our story begins, he found himself well on the way to be the temporary lion of a London season.

The raw chilliness of early dawn stole in upon him through the open window after this night of agitation and reminiscence. When the maid came to put his little sitting-room in order she was surprised to see its occupant there, still in evening *toilette*, with morning twilight struggling with the yellow flicker of the lamp, which yet burned on the table.

The first order he gave her was to call the

landlady, when he settled his bill and gave up his lodgings. After this he hurried to an International ticket-office, and applied for passage to New York in the next steamer.

"The *Crimea* is next, she sails to-morrow," said the clerk. "Or will you wait for a *Cunarder*?"

"Whichever goes first. I am impatient to get home on pressing business," said the colonel.

"I doubt if there is any berth to be had in the *Crimea*," said the clerk, consulting a plan of the vessel. "All were taken up a day or two ago by a large party. But perhaps," he added, "if you apply to the office at Liverpool or on board, at the last moment, you may happen on a vacancy. Passengers often give their berths up just as the ship is ready to sail."

The colonel had stimulated this man's interest, either by the look of disappointment in his face, or by the propitiatory offering of a fine cigar.

"Thank you. I shall lose no time. I'll take the first train to Liverpool."

He drove to the house of his friend, the Secretary of Legation, whom he found still in bed. In a few words he announced that, in consequence of letters received the night before, he was going home in the *Crimea*.

"What! give up all your prospects for the season?"

"I must leave London by ten o'clock. Will you make my apologies at the Legation, and to your chief, with whom I am engaged to dine on Monday, and, — another thing, — if you can, oblige me by seeing my publisher? though that is not necessary, perhaps, since I have sent him a note full of regrets and excuses. Tell him how disappointed I am to miss his breakfast this morning. I shall never have such a chance again. I am sure you will excuse my troubling you."

"Oh! certainly. I will do it for you with pleasure, or rather, I should say, with extreme regret. I execute many commissions in my official capacity. We of the diplomatic corps are the servants of our republican sovereigns."

"I shall be back again, perhaps, before the season is over, but I know that by going home now I miss my chance. Mrs. Leo Hunter will find her material elsewhere. A traveller differs from a literary man, — he has but one success. His reputation is worthless after it grows stale. I should have enjoyed the pleasant things that seemed in store for me. Good-by, and thank you for much kindness at the Embassy."

So saying, Colonel Wolcott ran down the stairs, opened the front door before the servant could perform that duty, and closed it after him, as no Englishman, whatever his excitement, would

have done. For English social etiquette demands that a stranger's exit shall take place in the presence of a competent witness, who is held responsible for the propriety of the departure.

In half an hour he was in a first-class carriage at the Euston Square station, waiting to start for that New York that he had left, in a white heat of pain and anger, nine eventful years before.

CHAPTER III.

HER WEDDED HUSBAND.

Come with me, thou delightful child,
Come with me, though the wave is wild
And the winds are loose. We must not stay,
Or the slaves of the law may rend thee away.

Then sit between us two, thou dearest, —
Me and thy mother.

SHELLEY.

COLONEL WOLCOTT, alone in his railway carriage, with his maps, bag, the morning's "Times," "Punch," and the last illustrated paper, sat looking idly at the motley English crowd, which flocked, with more superfluous haste than would have showed itself among Americans, into the station.

The crowd was as uninteresting as it was motley, until three persons appeared who attracted his attention. These were an old gentleman in a light overcoat, with a stolid English face, white whiskers of old-fashioned cut, and silvery hair; a lady of middle height, closely veiled, and dressed in mourning; and a young, frank-looking, dark-haired boy, in a velvet suit, who clung to his

mother's skirts, — for they were evidently mother and child.

It was the first child of that age and condition whom Colonel Wolcott had happened to see since the startling news, a few hours before, of his own paternity; and he looked at the little fellow with a lively interest. He was evidently a gentleman's son. From the boy, Colonel Wolcott glanced at the mother. She wore a travelling wrap of light stuff, which concealed her figure; but he was struck by the dainty neatness of her gloves and boots, the elasticity of her walk, and the whole *pose* of her person. He had been used to watch veiled, shrouded females in Mohammedan lands, and could discern a woman's points "under her muffler." There was something about this woman, little as he could see of her, that attracted him, — a dignified ladylikeness, a "cultured grace," which marked her one who differed from the common crowd of travellers.

As he watched the group, a man who was selling railway literature came up to offer them an illustrated paper.

"Portrait of Colonel Wolcott, the distinguished traveller, sir! Here you have him!"

The old gentleman pushed him roughly on one side, and became fussy in his search after a carriage.

To the colonel's satisfaction, they stopped be-

fore the door of the one which he occupied, and in a few moments were seated in his company. The lady seated herself by a window, on the same side with himself; the little boy climbed into a place beside her, a vacant seat being left between himself and Colonel Wolcott. The old gentleman sat opposite the lady.

"Mamma! mamma!" cried the boy, pushing her and pointing to something in the crowd, "look! look! Oh! turn your head and see!"

"Indeed, Lance, I cannot see. I am too short-sighted."

These were the first words Colonel Wolcott heard, and the tone thrilled him. He drew back into his corner of the carriage, and slouched his hat over his brows, looking steadily at her as she unpinned her veil and prepared to make herself comfortable for the day's journey.

Could it be Adela? Could that be — *his* boy? She had called him Lance! As his eyes rested on her features, he began to recognize them, but how changed since he last saw her! The unformed, over-dressed young girl of his remembrance had ripened into a remarkably graceful and distinguished-looking person. He said to himself that perhaps she only so impressed him because he was entirely unused to cultivated women. But no! He had been at the Minister's the night before; he had seen European ladies at

Cairo, Alexandria, and Malta. There was something singularly high-bred and attractive in the set of her head and the curve of her cheek, — in the little ears whose beauty was accented by a tiny jewel.

Colonel Wolcott sat as if stunned by the discovery. "Who," he asked himself, "is the old gentleman? Where can they be coming from? Where can she be going?"

He looked at her embroidered satchel lying upon a vacant seat. On its side were worked in monogram three Anglo-Saxon letters, which he fancied might be the initials, "A. E. W." But pasted on its bottom was a paper label, which removed all doubts and afforded him the certainty he desired.

"*Mrs. Wolcott, passenger by the Crimea.*" He made a sudden resolution that, whatever it might cost him, he would make the voyage on that ship. He would persuade some other passenger to give him up his berth, — bribe, if need be ; pay anything : but go to New York in the Crimea, at all hazards. He would not again lose sight of Adela until their relations to each other were defined. What possibilities of explanation, of reconciliation might not arise on shipboard in a twelve days' voyage ! — though, alas ! he knew her mind, through Mr. Deane, concerning their relations to each other. That thought, like a chill, sudden wave, swept over his visions and blotted them.

“How far is she still bound to me?” he asked himself. “She has accepted—with willingness, the lawyer says—the prospect of a divorce. She is to lend me her assistance to dissolve our marriage. She never sent me news of my boy’s birth, she uttered no remonstrances against our separation. She is very rich, and I am very poor. I will not put my neck again under the yoke of her family. Perhaps we are divorced already,—Indiana law is swift, they say,—who knows? Good heaven! how could I have guessed what time would make of her? I see a likeness to her former self; but she gave no promise in her youth of such perfection. What chance have I to win her back, if she is free to choose another husband? Would she choose me, from all men, after what has passed? And would it be desirable that I should succeed in winning her if I could? And yet I am the father of her child. She has called him Lance, it seems,—Lancelot, after me!”

His mind dwelt with complacency upon this thought. He was grateful that his own name had been remembered, and that it did not happen to be Thomas or John.

Before he could recover his self-possession, the train started, and the boy moved to the seat opposite him, to be near the window. Colonel Wolcott made way with a sort of tender awe.

He would not give up this "delightful child." Such was his instant resolution. And yet his new sense of the inestimable value of such a child to any parent, awakened a new sympathy for her who shared with him the claim of parentage.

Another moment, and the train was in rapid motion.

"May I look at your picture-paper, if you please, sir?" said Lance.

The wondering father placed it in his hand. It was to the picture of a man in an Oriental uniform, with a full beard and bald forehead, that little Lancey turned. Under it was printed:—

"COLONEL LANCELOT WOLCOTT, THE DISTINGUISHED TRAVELLER."

"That's *my* name," said Lance, in a confidential whisper, after spelling out the letters under the woodcut. "That's my name, and this picture is the likeness of my papa. It don't look like him, though. It's not like mamma's photograph that she used to wear. This soldier has an old bald head. It is not like my papa a bit. But what a big, long, splendid beard he has got, has n't he!"

"Do you like long beards? His beard is no longer than mine."

"No! but I say, where did you get that beard, though? Did it take a long time for it to grow?"

"It took nine years, and it grew in the East, as your papa's did."

"O mamma," cried little Lance, "here's a gentleman come from the East, and I think perhaps he knew papa!"

"Come here, Lance ; let the gentleman alone," said their elderly escort in a sharp tone.

Adela turned round and looked earnestly at the stranger, but she spoke no word. He felt that it was touch and go with his identification. A sudden impulse seized him. If she failed to detect him, he would take advantage of the position little Lance had made for him. It might help him during the voyage.

"Would you like the paper, madam?" he said in a somewhat muffled tone. She took it as he held it out to her. He saw her furtively glance at the woodcut labelled with his name, trying, as he could well guess, to reconcile the presentment with her recollections of her husband.

As we already know, the illustration was the result of a mistake, and the portrait was the likeness of a confederate ex-general in the service of the Khedive. It helped to mislead Adela, however, and she sat in speechless surprise, trying to understand why her husband at thirty-two should look like a man of sixty.

As he gazed, her face became more and more familiar to him, in spite of all time's improving

touches. It was the face of Adela Engels still. Those were her tender, soft, short-sighted eyes, full of the pleading wistfulness that comes from a sense of deficient vision. He began to understand why she had not recognized him. She was *very* short-sighted, as he now recollected, and his beard, which had been acquired since they parted, was an effectual disguise. Still, he reflected, it was odd that she had failed to know his voice. Short-sighted people, as a rule, find compensation for their misfortune in an especial keenness of hearing. He did not take into account how a habit of speaking only in a foreign tongue alters the accent and gives a foreign modulation to the tone. Evidently she was wholly unaware so far that the husband of her youth sat beside her.

The bustle which accompanied their pause at the first station, and the arrival of fresh passengers, gave Lance another opportunity of returning to the window, where he seated himself opposite his new acquaintance, who seemed to attract him. He appeared to have no fancy for the third member of his own party, — the old gentleman.

"Is he your grandfather?" asked Colonel Wolcott, with a view of leading to the question, Who is he?

"No, indeed. He's no relation at all, — not

my uncle or anybody," replied Lance. "Mamma and I have just come over from New York. He's English. Mamma went to his ugly dark office, in London, and asked him to come with us. I wish she had n't. Do you like him? I don't. I wish he'd stayed away."

"Not particularly," answered the colonel dryly.

"I'm glad of that," said Lance, putting his little fist confidently into his father's hand.

Passing his arm around the boy, whom he drew beside his knee to watch the English landscape, Colonel Wolcott pressed him to his heart, and laid his cheek down lovingly on the dark curls.

"Lancey," said he in a whisper, "do you sometimes think of your papa?"

"Yes," replied Lance, also in an undertone, and with a glance at the old gentleman. "I always say, 'God bless papa!' every night and morning. Oh! see what a splendid big horse that man there has got."

So Adela had taught her child to breathe his name in prayer! "Prier c'est dire que l'on aime," says a French poet. He dared not take for granted so much, yet surely her heart must be tender towards the man for whom she taught her little son to pray.

"My mamma," went on Lance, after the big horse had been left a mile behind, "says that

maybe, when my papa was in danger among the Afghans, — she read about it to me in a book he has been making, — my little prayer may have come just in time to help him. Did you know about that? Did he tell about it himself? You were there at the same time with him, were you not?”

The colonel nodded, but was silent, — silent as a convicted Sadducee might have found himself if suddenly brought face to face with his own guardian angel.

“Well, then, please tell it me all over again. I want to hear it very much. Mamma does not read to me any more in that book. She says she has forgotten all it tells about. When I was good she used to read it to me at night, but since we came away she keeps saying she has forgotten; and she has left the book in America. She used to know the stories all by heart though before we came to England. I think mamma is growing old. Grandpapa says when people grow old they always forget things.”

Colonel Wolcott took his boy upon his knee, and in a low voice began the narrative of an escape from robbers in Central Asia, which formed one of the most thrilling chapters in his book of travels. Lancey sat looking in his face, devouring every word, and correcting him whenever he deviated in any point from the printed account.

●

One story of adventure led to another. The old gentleman leaned over and evidently whispered remonstrances to the mother, but she did not call away her child.

By degrees the motion of the carriage, the morning of excitement, the strain on his attention, and the summer heat, overcame the little fellow. He dropped asleep upon his father's breast. The white-haired gentleman seemed affronted that his words had no effect. He became silent, and wore the air of a person who washed his hands of the result, whatever it might be. He got out, with other passengers, to refresh himself, at Birmingham. Adela moved to the seat opposite her child and husband.

"He tires you, I am afraid," she said gently, as she did so.

"Oh, no! pray permit me," said Colonel Wolcott pleadingly. He almost betrayed himself by the earnestness of his tones.

"I presume," she said nervously, "that I address the friend of Colonel Wolcott, Mr. A., who was with him in his imprisonment."

Her husband bowed. "I was there," he said indistinctly.

But Adela was too nervous to observe his agitation. She went on breathlessly: "I have a request to make of you. You may think it strange. Perhaps it is imprudent. I am sure

that Mr. Smith would not approve. But I think you will feel for me. Colonel Wolcott is now on his way back — to England. Do not mention to him that you have seen us, — me and my boy.”

“Why not?” said Colonel Wolcott. “Surely, you cannot think it just to keep a father from all knowledge of his own child?”

“You naturally sympathize with your friend. You take a man’s view of the situation. How should the law know what is best for a child? Mine has never, since he was born, been away from me, — not for a night. Is it just to take him from me now, and to give him over to a man who has never written to us since his birth, — who has never taken the trouble even to acknowledge him?”

“Never even to acknowledge him?” repeated Colonel Wolcott, in a low voice. It was the preface to something more he would fain have asked. But tears were gathering in Adela’s eyes. She was so anxious to complete what she wished to say herself that she did not remark the interruption.

“Do me this kindness,” she said. “Accident alone has made us meet. Do not take advantage of it to bring me into trouble. I only ask your silence a few weeks. I ask you because frankness seems but right since Lance has told you who we are. I think I may trust you.”

"Yes, you may trust me, and have no fears. But," added Colonel Wolcott, making a sudden decision, "may I take it on myself to say that when your husband was in the East, and long after, he knew nothing of the existence of this beautiful boy? You must remember how few letters got safely through the lines in the days of the Confederacy —"

At this moment the other passengers who had left the train came back from the refreshment tables. Adela made no reply. Colonel Wolcott sank back into his seat, with his boy's head closely pressed against his bosom. Soft yearnings, such as he had never before felt, were stirring in his soul. Instincts that he had not comprehended were making themselves felt within him. The ice and snow about his heart were melting into fertilizing drops of tender feeling.

There lay the boy in all the flush and rosiness of health, — no longer a mere infant, incomprehensible and uninteresting to a bewildered father, but a *boy*, with a boy's will, a boy's thoughts, a boy's distinct views of things and people round him; a boy old enough to be moulded by a double influence into gentle manhood, old enough to know that he ought to have two parents, — to wonder and inquire why he had only one.

Colonel Wolcott's own affections, during his

roving, busy life, had been happily unspoiled by waste or desecration.

“He sought
(For his lost heart was tender) things to love.”

The moist curls rested on his breast ; the lovely rounded cheeks and dimpled chin, flushed with the midday heat, seemed roses lightly touched with summer dew. Lance had flung one arm across his new friend as he slept ; one little hand clasped the lapel of his coat. It was an attitude that seemed to the lone man as an appeal for fatherhood and for protection. As he gazed down with delight on the sweet rosy face, it appeared as if conspiring angels slowly drew him, conducted him home, by ardent longings for possession of the child, by throbs of tender yearning, towards the woman who had borne him.

CHAPTER IV.

HIS WEDDED WIFE.

Her even carriage is as far from coyness
As from immodesty . . .
In suffering courtship, in requiting kindness
In use of places, hours, and companies,
Free as the sun and nothing more corrupted.
As circumspect as Cynthia in her vows,
As constant as the centre to observe them.
Truthful and bounteous—never fierce nor dull—
In all her courses ever at the full.

CHAPMAN, M. d' OLIVE.

SO husband and wife sat opposite to each other in the railway carriage, outwardly, visibly, bodily united by their child, a living link ; invisibly and actually set asunder by a chasm in their married life filled by bitter memories, misconceptions, misinterpretations, and unkind words, like other fissures in which lurk poisonous and dangerous broods.

Their child—his child as well as hers—lay with his dewy curls upon his father's heart, one sturdy leg thrown up upon his mother's lap, and all the time she talked she stroked it tenderly.

How rarely, under ordinary circumstances, husband and wife converse ! They talk together about matters of mutual concern and interest, discuss, agree or disagree, differ, find fault or praise, but that is all. It seems impossible for partners in the married state, unless helped out by the presence of a third person, to enjoy between themselves the pleasures of conversation. It is one of the delights of courtship that married people virtually renounce when they assume the marriage vows. The Frenchman was not so far wrong who complained that if he married the lady whom it had been his chief pleasure to visit, he should have nowhere to spend his leisure time. In this case it was easier for the wife to talk, who had not yet recognized her husband, than for the husband, conscious that the woman whose presence was now agitating his whole being was the wife whom he had so lately been minded to "put away."

They had taken on the yoke of marriage carelessly, they had thrown it off recklessly. Each had supposed that life, after they parted, would no longer be influenced by their discarded vows ; each had forgotten that when the chain uniting them was snapped, its broken links would still cling to them. The man, in the excitement of war and travel, had ceased to feel the weight of these broken fetters until he returned, older and

more matured, to European civilization ; but the woman, ripening amid the checks of modern life, and acquiring a deeper sense of the obligations of religion, had come to recognize her true position : across the gulf her spirit had been yearning towards her boy's lost father, — towards the husband in whom only, as a Christian woman, she could seek the completion of herself.

Doubtless they had come together under a mistake, but they were *wife* and *husband*. That relation was as fixed as if they had been parent and child, or brother and sister. Adela fully understood what many wives and husbands fail to recognize, that once married, no matter how the marriage came about, there is no going behind the marriage vow, no release from the marriage obligation.

In her work-basket at home lay half a pair of scissors. The scissors had been part of the fittings of a little French *étui* that her husband had given her soon after their marriage. She kept the useless fragment, and took a lesson from it daily. She looked at it with sympathy and with regret. It was herself in symbol. In her day-dreams she had long thought of him as coming back to her with some adaptation of the pleading words of the Prodigal, when, before he could utter his repentance, she would have fallen on his neck, and stifled his confession with her tears and kisses.

Instead of this, his lawyer had paid a visit to her father in business hours, to state that "he had been commissioned by Colonel Wolcott to take steps for an immediate, and they hoped an amicable, dissolution of the marriage."

The shock was terrible. It laid waste the sunny garden of her dreams. It made even her relations with her child a matter of insecurity. Her honor, too, and her good name, were put in peril. In a divorce suit, what might not lawyers say of her? Above all, her Christian faith, which had been growing in breadth, fervency, and knowledge, was brought into collision with her womanly pride and delicacy. The one enjoined her to do everything to defeat the intentions of her husband; the other revolted against asserting any legal claims upon a man who professed publicly to be anxious to get rid of her.

Meantime the conversation between herself and the dark stranger, who had been, as she believed, imprisoned in the Afghan hill-fort with her husband, flowed on agreeably. She was desirous to impress him favorably, and exerted herself to please.

This was not difficult, for she was a charming talker. Circumstances had led to her cultivating a natural gift for social intercourse, though she had never cared to take a leading part in fashionable society. The Wolcott property on the

North River had, after Mrs. Wolcott's death, been purchased by a well-known American artist. With him and with his family Adela had lived ever since on terms of great intimacy and affection. In their house, during the summer and autumn months, which the fierce heat of the American continent converts into a long national holiday, she met the people worthiest to be known from all parts of America; a class who, joining native originality to European culture, are perhaps the most delightful companions in the world. In their homes their work-a-day occupations absorb them; but in the holiday life of the summer months they enjoy leisure and collect inspiration for coming literary and artistic campaigns. Then they shake off their retired habits, live gregariously, and are the very cream of intellectual society, with a *soupeçon* of native flavor to distinguish them from cultivated foreigners, like their mongrel geese, wild turkeys, celery-fed canvas-backs, and prairie hens.

In this school Adela had learned to listen and to talk, and to exercise a subtile influence over men of cultivation. Not the influence of a woman caring for vain homage,—for she was free from any tinge of coquetry,—but that of one who, having accepted her own destiny in life, cares not to discuss it or to question, but finds a chief interest in other people, and delights to minister

to the amusement, the improvement, and the happiness of all around her.

Wherever Mrs. Wolcott went she was welcomed, and the certainty of giving pleasure breeds a thousand charms. Men liked to come under her influence. She generated an atmosphere more full of oxygen than that which is ordinarily breathed in good society. Good men found inspiration in her talk, and carried back her influence to their studios and libraries.

To please was her aim in social life, — a dangerous aim, of course, unless we restore to the word "please" its rightful meaning. It means, not "to attract love," but "to give pleasure." How charming, how invaluable she might have been to society, in its highest sense, had she occupied her true place in her husband's household! But fashionable social life in her position of "deserted wife" was painful and embarrassing, and she was rarely seen except in the limited field of North River summer society.

Thus the beautiful woman, with soft, short-sighted eyes, and clear, bright skin, through which the warm blood showed itself in sudden flushes, was no novice in the art of entertaining men; and she did her best to please and win this stranger, whom she supposed might have influence with her husband.

He, on the contrary, was glowing with excite-

ment and suppressed emotion as they flew past towns and lovely landscapes, gay with English green, past English rectories and country-seats, nestling in trees and shrubbery, past peasants' cottages, picturesque and full of rheumatism, through Staffordshire, where fires glint and shoot up from grimy wastes, and Nature, elsewhere prodigal, disdains to aid in rectifying the ugliness which man has made.

At a junction with a railroad from the north, a gentleman got into their carriage. The groom who put dressing-case and fishing-rod in after him, touched his hat, and said, "Good-bye, Sir George."

After a while he joined their conversation, beginning by a remark to Colonel Wolcott about "*your* little boy."

Adela made no objection to his self-introduction. She and her companion had been talking about the East. Colonel Wolcott observed that she did not (like Lance) put any queries about his supposed adventures with her husband; but he found her well-informed on Eastern customs, able to ask intelligent questions, and to understand allusions. They spoke of travelling. She was an inexperienced traveller, having never been abroad before, but she was so thoroughly pre-fitted to be one of those to whose cultivated souls all Europe would become "a lordly pleasure-house," that a thrill passed through his heart as

he detected in himself a scheme to bribe her back by offering her that feast of delights which to an American of cultivated tastes is found in journeying at leisure in the Old World.

After a time the conversation drifted to America, whither it seemed Sir George was also bound, having a passage engaged in the Crimea. To Colonel Wolcott's astonishment, he heard his wife discussing American politics with a thorough appreciation of the details of the war, the condition of the South, and the future policy to be pursued towards it.

"You will be surprised," she said to the Englishman, "to find so few traces of popular exultation at the North over its victory. There is no disposition to be vainglorious. The triumphs of the war were hard-won and very costly; but, politics apart, there is an almost universal national disposition to shake hands and be friends."

"Did you see anything of the war while it was going on?" said the young Englishman.

"I had no personal experience of actual warfare," she replied, "but there was war in every breath we drew, and perpetual war excitement in our cities,—the movement of troops, the procurement of substitutes, the regulation of hospitals, the trains of sick and wounded, families bereaved, the women constantly at work for the Sanitary Commission.. I had a good deal to do

with the Elmira and Fort Delaware prisoners, however, particularly Georgians, from whom I used to receive a dozen or more letters every day. They addressed me always as 'Dear Aunt' or 'Dear Cousin,' not being permitted to correspond with any one not related to them; but the United States commanding officers winked at such temporary relationships. I supplied their wants, from 'a prayer-book, Monte Cristo, and a bottle of Sozodont,'—requested by one young dandy,—to loaves of soft bread, chewing tobacco, Bologna sausages, cheese, cast-off clothing, old novels, periodicals, and religious literature."

She went on to relate some amusing experiences in her intercourse with her "cousins" in the rebel army, adding, "Permission to write letters was a very great boon to them. Men who had not handled a pen for years embraced every opportunity of writing half a sheet to somebody. They used to send us tokens of their gratitude,—fans carved out of shingles, watch-chains made from knitting-pins, and black rings made out of their gutta-percha buttons."

She drew off one as she spoke, to show it to Sir George; and Colonel Wolcott saw, with satisfaction and delight, that it was worn as the guard of her wedding ring.

He sat by almost silent, and watched her as she talked to the young Englishman. He dared not,

of course, exhibit any knowledge of the war or of the Southern Confederacy. Was it for his sake that she, all those years, had been good to the rebel prisoners? Had she identified herself with those from his own State, had she provided for them for his sake, corresponded with them, while he had only thought of her as a "Union-shrieking" virago?

His impulse was to fall down at her knees, to sue for forgiveness, to humble himself; to do any other insane thing; but here little Lance roused up, and struggled to look out of the window.

The train was running at full speed. It was afternoon. They had just passed the great viaduct, a few miles out of Manchester. There was a sudden jerk, and a quick tremor ran through all the train. The carriage gave three bounds, a drag, a snap, and was off the rails. It had broken its coupling. The passengers were thrown forward. A shrill shriek came from little Lance, a prayer from the lips of his mother. But the danger and the shock were over together. Everybody scrambled back into his seat, and looked for explanation into his neighbor's eyes. In the crash Adela Wolcott had been thrown forward, with her head upon the shoulder of her husband. Even in that supreme moment it had thrilled him to have her lying for an instant on his breast. But Lance's cries recalled him to

himself, and Adela recovered her seat without perceiving his emotion.

Lancey's face had been badly cut by the broken window-glass. He had a gash across his pretty upper lip, another on his forehead. His mother turned as pale as death. She gathered her boy into her arms, while Colonel Wolcott endeavored to pick away the morsels of glass which adhered to the two gashes.

"Don't cry, my boy!" he said. "See how your crying distresses poor mamma."

Lance looked up into his mother's face, and bravely tried to check his sobs, while blood ran over his pretty velvet dress, and his little arms clung to his mother's neck with a convulsive strain.

Colonel Wolcott, as soon as he could get a guard to let him out, sprang from the train, and brought water in his hat from a pool near them. He felt indignant with Sir George for unwarrantable interference with his privileges, when he found, on coming back, that he had opened his dressing-case and produced some toilette essence, with which Adela was already washing the wounds.

"Cold water is much the best for it," he said, with authority in his voice, though he knew nothing about the matter. She assented. Together they proceeded to wash and dress the face of their little boy.

"Perhaps there is a surgeon on the train," said Colonel Wolcott, looking at good-natured Sir George, who immediately set out in quest of one. He found a medical student, who drew together the cuts with some plaster from his pocket-book, and put a bandage of handkerchiefs over the child's forehead.

"Will it make him ill, doctor?" said Adela, with anxious eyes.

"Oh, no! A trifle feverish for a few days, perhaps, but a little care will set him all to rights. Let the wounds heal by first intention."

And the doctor departed to the wounded in other carriages, who really needed his professional skill.

Sir George, too, disappeared, to be of use if possible. Not so, however, the old gentleman. He had been sulky all the journey, and had taken no part in the conversation. He seemed to have some mistrust of Mrs. Wolcott, and to feel it his duty never to lose sight of her or of her son. But for his presence, Colonel Wolcott might have broken his resolution to avoid all explanation with his wife until they met on shipboard.

Adela, however, no longer seemed mindful of his presence, or of things around her. She said that she had not been hurt, but she seemed stunned, and drew forth several anxious questions from her escort. Alarmed, surprised, discomfited,

she sat silent, for in the midst of the confusion she had recognized her husband. His hat had been taken off to bring water from the pool. He had stood close to her. She knew him by his brow, his eyes, his hands, an ornament on his watch-chain, by a green seal-ring on one of his fingers. Her nerves were in no state to bear another shock. She kept thinking of the warnings of Mr. Smith, and reproaching herself for not having left the train at Birmingham, as he desired. And now that the accident had roused her fears for Lance, a worse danger than a railway smash had opened upon her like a masked battery. It was a danger brought upon them by her own imprudence. The mother-heart within her conjured up visions of all possible difficulties and disasters which might arise out of the complication. She reproached herself with having delivered her child into the hands of his enemy ; with having compassed, almost plotted, his separation from herself. Her motherhood had placed her in unnatural relations with her husband. For a while her sole thought was that the catastrophe, from which for years she had prayed hourly for deliverance, had fallen unawares upon her.

What would he do next ? He had said very little, she now remembered with a pang, during their conversation. The animation had been chiefly hers. Yet he had surely said, " Trust

me"; he had told Lance not to cry, because his crying "distressed poor mamma"; he had taken care to let her know that he had been ignorant of the child's birth.

Nevertheless, she could not control her apprehensions. Terrified and excited, she remembered that he had occupied himself almost wholly about Lance. Was she, then, nothing but the wife whom he was anxious to divorce,—the woman who, in the hour of his humiliation, had sided with her family? The tables were now turned. He had the upper hand with her. The powers of the law were in his favor. She had expected to confront his power in America, and had brought her boy to England to place him beyond reach of any judicial decision. Her own imprudence had thrown the child into the very hands from which she hoped to save him.

Before this anguish passed, another wave of bitterness swelled over her.

Lancey, with the customary self-absorption of a child, felt it to be his right, since he was hurt, to be humored by everybody. He took a whim to change his place from his mother's arms to those of the stranger.

"He holds me best," he fretted. "I want to go to him. You press me up too tight, mamma."

On hearing this, the flattered father took back his wounded child, unconscious of the pang that wrung the heart of the deserted mother.

“He is glad to go! He is glad to leave me! O God! I never expected this!” she thought. “I always thought his little heart would break. I had fancied he would cling to me as the poor Dauphin did to Marie Antoinette, and that they would have to force him from his mother. He goes of his own accord! This is too bitter, O my God!”

Her own exclamation, “O my God!” brought her thoughts back to patience and prayer. It would not do to part with trust and confidence in God, her only friend, and to drift off, without hold or hope, she knew not where.

So little Lancey lay before her hungry, eager eyes, and cooed his confidences into the ear of his strange father, played with his watch-chain, stroked his beard, and permitted his caresses; while in his mother’s heart rang a verse out of Isaiah, — a verse of which she had never thought before, but which now seemed “driven in upon her”: “Two things have come upon thee in one day: loss of children, and widowhood. Who shall be sorry for thee?”

Should she pray that her own death might leave them to each other? Should she break the commandment women hold most sacred, and give up opposition to his wish for a divorce from her? Must she consent to let him make a second marriage? Her treatment had driven him to

court "battle, and murder, and sudden death," in savage lands. Had she not better now make up to him for what he had for nine long years suffered because of her?

At this moment she perceived that he was unobtrusively making some small arrangements with the shawls and bags for her comfort. She lifted up her eyes and fixed them for the first time on his face; for the gloom of the twilight made it almost dark now in the carriage. As she scanned his features, thoughts of the pride that she had felt in his manly beauty during her few brief, happy days of courtship and of hope, rushed like a flood over her memory. Of late years he had occupied a little shrine set up in her secret heart, where she had worshipped him, at first with repentance and with pity, but recently, under the influence of his book, with that enthusiasm with which women bow down before heroes.

Some of the travellers on the train had left their carriages, and were walking beside the track. One of them, an elderly man, dressed like a clergyman, stopped at their window as he passed.

"Why, Mrs. Wolcott!—you here? I had no idea you were in England. How long since you left home?"

"Not long, doctor."

"Going back?"

"Yes."

"I hope in the Crimea?"

Her answer was inaudible to Colonel Wolcott, but he heard the doctor say something about "other passengers." At that she leaned out of the window and asked him a question. The doctor answered it by turning towards a group of people who were talking with loud voices at the door of another carriage.

"Yes, indeed; she is going with us. You know Mrs. Tontine, of course; or shall I introduce her to you?"

"Oh, we shall meet on board. I know her very well," said Adela.

"Can I do anything for you? Who is with you? I suppose you are not travelling alone?"

"No; Mr. Smith, my lawyer, from London, is taking care of me."

The doctor lifted his hat, and walked on.

After a little pause, Adela addressed her husband for the first time since she had discovered him.

"Are you going to America?"

"Yes; in the Crimea."

She held her peace. If that were so, one anxiety was over. He would not probably attempt to take her boy from her before they sailed, even if he had made arrangements to get posses-

sion of him as soon as they should be in American waters. "The slaves of the law" might come in the pilot-boat to "rend him away" from her, at Sandy Hook. She did not know the ways of American jurisprudence, and all dangers are most terrible when we meet them in the dark. Nor did Mr. Smith know much about United States law. Probably he could not have answered her, had she been willing to lay before him her consciousness of being out of her depth in a new sea of troubles. He had already admonished her about holding any intercourse with a gentleman who was Colonel Wolcott's friend. What would he now say if she confessed she had committed herself to her husband? She had taken her own way, and naturally dreaded to let him know the mistake into which it had landed her.

But Cora Noble—Mrs. Tontine—was she going home in the Crimea? Above all, was it by collusion? At this thought, all pity for her husband, all desire of self-effacement, fell away from her.

"If it is to be a contest between her and me," she thought, "if he has to make a choice again between us,—I accept the challenge! I have God upon my side, and my claims as the joint parent of his son. I will make my child all safe before we leave England; and then, God help me! God defend the right! I feel as if I were

drawing a sword, and crying, 'Dieu et mon droit !' as I go into the battle."

They remained two hours on the spot where the accident had taken place, and little further passed between the wife and husband. To watch her was to Colonel Wolcott less embarrassing than to converse with her. What the nature of the accident was that detained them, he never inquired. At last they were transferred to another train, and, after a good many brief delays, reached Liverpool about nightfall.

The young surgeon, on their arrival at the station, came to the door of the carriage to inquire after his little patient. Colonel Wolcott had the satisfaction of privately pressing a fee into his hand, whispering, "This is for my son"; and heard Adela ask him the address of the principal physician in Liverpool.

When they got out of the train, he entreated her permission still to carry Lance. It was granted; but the mother walked beside him, holding the skirt of her child's little coat, as though she dared not trust him quite out of her hands.

Mr. Smith found a hackney coach, and assisted Mrs. Wolcott to enter it. Colonel Wolcott pressed a last kiss on his boy's forehead, and then laid him on the knees of his mother. He heard the order given to drive to the house of an eminent Liverpool practitioner.

Cut off from all expression of an anxiety as legitimate as was her own for the welfare of their child, Colonel Wolcott ran back into the station, collected his own traps and belongings, got into a cab, and ordered it also to drive to the house of the surgeon. There he waited in the street till the hall-door reopened, and Adela, with her veil over her face, came out, supported by Mr. Smith, and leading little Lancey by the hand. She started when she perceived her husband on the doorstep, and he thought that both she and her elderly guardian looked confused as well as annoyed.

"I waited," he said pleadingly, "to hear what the doctor said of Lance. If you will let me know, I shall be deeply obliged to you. Will it be long before it gets well? Will it leave a scar?"

"He thinks very little of the cuts. He says they will soon heal," she said hurriedly, as she passed him. "Thank you, and good night."

In a few moments they were in their carriage. He watched it as it rattled along the silent street, and felt more lonely than he had ever felt before. He ordered the cab to drive to the office of the Blue Crescent Line of steamers, hoping to make arrangements for his passage in the *Crimea*. The office had been closed for some hours.

"Could he get on board the *Crimea*?" he asked.

“Not until the morning ; she was in the stream off Birkenhead.”

There was nothing left to do but to drive to a hotel and go to bed, — a very different man from the lion *in posse* of the London season, who, twenty-four hours before, had congratulated himself upon his freedom from family incumbrances, and on being “light-hearted and content,” like a homeless Arab.

All night he tossed in uneasy slumbers. Sleeping or waking, he was haunted by one vision, — a woman, sad and beautiful, with that firm step by which his eyes had been first struck when he saw her on the platform of the station. “A perfect woman, nobly planned,” were words that rang their changes in his memory. This was no woman of worldly proclivities, as he had always fancied his wife to be, no fashionable lady, enervated by busy idleness or by aimless efforts at activity, but a creature “nobly planned,” with vigor, self-possession, and the beauty of strength. Yet there was delicacy and refinement in each outline and curve of her expressive face, showing that heart and mind were in harmony with her physical organization.

Sometimes during that uneasy night he saw her pleading with him not to take away her child. Once in his dreams he clasped her to his heart, and she melted like a snow-wraith. Once

he was floating out to sea, stretching his arms towards her. At times he saw her face, and saw her turn it from him with repulsion. Again she sank into his arms and yielded herself up to his embrace, and all was rapture. And then, across these visions bathed with golden light, passed a dark cloud of vulgarizing thoughts. He beheld himself, with proud disgust, in the character of a ruined Southern gentleman, repairing his broken fortunes with his father-in-law's wealth, — and all was dark once more.

CHAPTER V.

THE TENDER.

See how yon flaming herald treads
The ridged and rolling waves,
As, crashing o'er their crested heads,
She bows her surly slaves!
With foam before and fire behind
She rends the clinging sea,
That flies before the roaring wind
Beneath her hissing lee.
With flashing wheel, with lifted keel,
And smoking torch on high,
When winds are loud and billows reel,
She thunders foaming by.

O. W. HOLMES.

THE morning proved foggy and overcast, as are seven eighths of the mornings in the gray city of Liverpool. Colonel Wolcott roused himself from troubled, unrefreshing sleep, with a feeling that the hopes and desires which had seemed to him most secure were shaken to their centre. He had an oppressive sense of the strange change in his own wishes and position. At his last waking he had plumed himself upon his independence: *now* he woke, like Gulliver, invisibly but closely tied. He was a lover, "lost could he not win"; a husband and a father, with-

out claim to wife or child. Possibilities of every kind lay broad before him. His courage was good, his will strong, and his purpose plain; besides which, though self-reliant in some ways, he possessed that natural humility which, because it will sacrifice anything short of self-respect to gain its purpose, is the strongest element in success,—a foundation upon which good fortune may be securely built.

At an early hour he applied at the Blue Crescent office for a passage on board the *Crimea*, which was to sail at noon that day.

“Impossible. Every berth is taken. A party from New York engaged every vacant state-room two days ago.”

“I *must* go in the *Crimea*,” cried Colonel Wolcott. “Can you tell me of any one likely to sell me his ticket for this passage?”

Before the clerk could answer, a man rushed into the office, stout-built, sandy-haired, and purple with anxiety and hurry.

“Can I give up my berth in the *Crimea*?”

“We never return passage-money.”

“I have got a round-trip ticket. I want to exchange my passage back for a berth in the *Bulgaria*.”

“What name?”

“Joseph Dobson.”

“Well, Mr. Dobson, we might do it in that case; but there is a difference to pay.”

"How much?"

"Five pounds. Shall I book you by the Bulgaria?"

"If you please. Here's my ticket and your five pounds. It's a good deal, though."

The clerk deliberately wrote out another card, regardless of the impatience of the two men who stood before him, and, when he had watched Dobson out of the office, turned to the colonel.

"You are in luck," handing him the ticket. "Mr. Dobson has a very good berth, near the companion. What name shall I say?"

"No matter," said the colonel. "No need to alter the ship's manifest. I can travel very well as Joseph Dobson."

"As you please. The tender starts precisely at ten with mails and passengers."

As Colonel Wolcott left the office he met Captain Moore of the Crimea coming in.

"Are all my papers right? All ready for me this morning?"

"Yes, Captain. It's a fine season of the year for you to cross in. You will make one of your quick runs."

"Yes; if the machinery will bear full pressure. I am a little anxious this trip about the machinery. Let me see, to-day is the 6th of June: you will see me back here this day month, if all goes well."

"There's a fellow, Captain, on the passenger list, travelling under a false name, with an enormous black beard. You had best have a sharp eye on him. He sails as Joseph Dobson, and has got one of the berths on the port side aft, near the companion."

"What kind of man is he?"

"Tall — all black, eyes and beard. Something foreign or Jewish about him, may be a Mississippi gambler. Too much hair about his face for a gentleman."

"I'll look out for him. Thank you. I don't want to load the ship with that kind of black cattle."

How circumstances alter cases! At the Minister's entertainment, two nights before, Colonel Wolcott's oriental beard had been the envy of the men and the admiration of the women.

He was by this time on board the tender which was lying at the Crimea's wharf, waiting for mails and passengers. Soon the little tug became crowded. The scene was one of lively bustle. Huge trunks were being hoisted in. Gay parties, homeward bound, were in high spirits. Commercial travellers, accustomed to the trip, felt a sort of proprietorship as their feet quitted the shore-plank, and cheerfully made themselves at home on passing through the gangway.

In some groups there were tearful partings.

There were beloved ones spending together their last moments, with hearts too full to make the boon of any value, never to meet again, had they but known their fate, until that "time of the restitution of all things," when parting shall be one of the trials that is forever done away; there were Mark Tapleys, striving to be "jolly"; women, with their hearts oozing from swollen eyelids; gay girls, in smart travelling costumes, initiating the flirtations of the voyage; mothers of families, careful and troubled about many things; fathers in chase of luggage; children in mischief; wonderment and mirth, bustle and hurry, everywhere, and universal unmindfulness of the approaching horrors of a "chopping sea."

All the Americans had an air of being at home on board the tender. The English, although not yet out of their own port, already seemed like foreigners. Had not every American on board made at least one ocean voyage? Crossing the ocean is a thing of such every-day experience to an American, either in his own person or in that of those about him, that it is robbed of half its terrors. "We fear and hate the utterly unknown," says Canon Kingsley, "and that only." The leading interests of daily life in America are connected with the Atlantic Ocean. There it is regarded as a link — by an Englishman as a separation. The ocean is the highway which

brings everything most delightful to an American's home. It is not to him, as to the Englishman, a waste of waters parting him from his associations, cutting him off from all he holds of interest in the world. An American's news, letters, books, clothes, *prima donnas*, fashions, ancestors, and church associations, all come to him from across seas, while to an English traveller the voyage seems like cutting adrift from civilization, to venture, Columbus-like, into an unknown world.

The colonel, standing near the gangway, watched every one who came on board, but saw nothing of his wife or of her boy. He had been into the cabins; he had explored dim corners of the little vessel; he had even visited the engine-room, on the presumption that the intelligence of the child might have made him curious about machinery. He examined all the faces in the crowd, but saw no signs of Lance or of Adela.

At last, just as the shore-plank was about to be drawn in, a carriage drove rapidly to the wharf. The old gentleman of the railroad train alighted. A stout man, who had been pointed out to Colonel Wolcott as Captain Moore of the Crimea, shook hands with him, and assisted him in helping out Adela. The three crossed the plank. No boy was with them. Adela, closely veiled, was sobbing bitterly.

“Good heavens!” cried her husband. “She has left him behind! She must have come over to England to hide him from me!”

For one moment he was moved to rush up to her, to grasp her arm, to whisper “Adela!”—to claim her, to implore her to forgive the past, take him back, be his wife once more. “Then,” he reflected in sudden excitement, “we might disembark at Queenstown, reclaim the child, go on to the Continent, and begin the honeymoon of our true marriage!”

But then other thoughts arose. “Until the proceeds of my book come in I have very little money,” he told himself. “I should be simply an adventurer, living upon her father’s purse,—her father, whom I despise. Who knows if we are not divorced already? Who knows in what relation we are now standing to each other? Why did I not telegraph to Deane last night for information? She has left Lance behind, she thinks she has made him safe. Her one idea is to get rid of me, and hold on to our child. She shall have him! God bless her! Shall I tell her so at once? How can I, in this terrible confusion? No man upon earth would dare to risk his chance in such a crowd, or could plead with any justice to himself. No!” he continued, repeating a Mohammedan proverb, “‘Deliberation is of God, haste is of the devil.’ I will trust to

the chances of ship life, when we are together on board."

All this time the puffing tender was plunging towards the black hull of the leviathan which lay in the stream, her vast bulk swaying up and down with the indolent, dull heaving of the tide, while watery sunshine gleamed faintly through the mist, and began to light up the smart gilt-work which has usurped in naval art the place of the time-honored figure-head.

Old Mr. Smith was standing guard over Adela. Her husband drew as near her as he could, and listened, with an echoing groan from his own heart, to the muffled sobs which told her misery.

The lawyer, however, made him a sign to draw apart, as a little crowd of gay Americans closed in around Adela, to look over her head on the port side of the boat, and take a view of the Crimea.

"Sir," he began, "I do not know your name,"—Colonel Wolcott bowed, but did not, as the other hoped, supply the deficiency,—"I am head of a London law firm, employed by Mrs. Wolcott's lawyer in New York to advise and assist her while she remains in England. You are aware, I presume, that a divorce suit is pending between her husband and herself. I deem it important that he should not be fully

informed of her movements for the present. It is much to be regretted that yesterday she was betrayed by *un enfant terrible*, — her little boy."

"He has done her no harm with me, sir," said Colonel Wolcott. "I do not see the child on board. Has she left him in Liverpool?"

"I am glad to hear you say so," said the lawyer, evading any answer to his question. "In the name of humanity, sir, have pity on the poor woman. The man who takes her child from her would be more cruel, it seems to me, than those coarse brutes brought up every day at our police courts for cruelty to women. A lady of her feelings and condition might have the life knocked out of her by such a blow. It seems to me that, if you see your friend, you would do well to advise him to arrange the matter quietly; or, better still, to reconsider it. Are you going back with us in the tender?"

Here the crowd pressed them apart again, and no time was left for further remarks or explanations. The tender was under the shadow of the mighty hull, and was being laid alongside of the *Crimea*.

Colonel Wolcott had only the opportunity to say, "I am an American, and am making the voyage —"

"An American! I thought you were A——, the Englishman in his book. You met him, did you not, in that hill fort of Cashmere?"

"I was born in America. Tell her that in everything I shall consult her wishes —"

Here the crowd parted them. The ladder was lowered, the ropes manned. Passengers and their friends began to swarm up the black side of the great ocean-going steamer.

Colonel Wolcott kept beside his wife, but she did not even see the hand he offered her. She was overwhelmed by her great grief, and with that grief was mingled at that moment a strain of bitterness against the man whose cruel hand had dealt such a blow. She went down to her own state-room at once, escorted by the captain and the elderly stranger.

Colonel Wolcott, as in a dream, watched the confusion round him. He saw partings in hot haste, and heard brave words of "Godspeed" and "good courage." The colored stewards stood in their exhibition jackets round the gangway, the officers in their smart, gold-banded caps. There was an outcry about one of Mrs. Tontine's trunks, which had been lowered into the hold through a mistake; but he connected no memories at that moment with Mrs. Tontine. His thoughts were with the mother of his child, who was sobbing her heart out under his feet in the largest and most expensive cabin in the boat, called on board the Bridal State-room.

The great bell rung. Those for the shore were

warned to leave the vessel. As the old lawyer passed through the gangway, blowing his nose, Colonel Wolcott stopped him.

"Excuse me. Tell me, is she already divorced?"

"I cannot say. She may be, American proceedings are so rapid. Allow me to say, sir, that I think American facilities of that nature infamous!"

And with these words he went over the side of the vessel.

The ship drew in her breath. The final order was given. Round went the steam-capstan till the anchor was hove up, a sail or two was set, her smoke streamed like a giant's feathers. The great steamship moved majestically down the Mersey. Little Lance was left behind.

Colonel Wolcott, on the guards, was roughly pushed about, requested to stand aside, ordered this way and that, as he stood, inattentive to things round him, gazing shoreward at the heights crowned by suburban villas on the edge of Liverpool.

The wind was getting fresh and the boat began to roll.

Alone with her grief, in the big state-room, looking shoreward at one of those villas where her boy remained behind, stood the other bereaved parent.

The ship's dog, a setter, of the Gordon breed, black touched with tan, had, ever since the colonel came on board, dogged his steps, looking wistfully into his face and nestling its nose into his fingers ; but Colonel Wolcott, though ordinarily the friend of animals, was in no humor to notice him. He was thinking of the last words of the English lawyer, and cursing the wickedness of those state laws which tempt uneasy married people to discontent, by holding out to them a knife with which to cut the bonds of matrimony, when probably, if never led into temptation by the offer of that knife, they might easily have accustomed themselves to the temporary galling and discontent which inevitably accompanies the wearing of a new and unfamiliar obligation.

CHAPTER VI.

LIFE AT SEA.

I find the sea life an acquired taste, like that for tomatoes and olives. The confusion, cold, motion, noise, and odors are not to be dispensed with. Nobody likes to be treated ignominiously, upset, shoved against the side of the house, rolled over, suffocated with bilge, mephitic, and stewing oil.

R. W. EMERSON.

THE remainder of the day was passed by the little world in the Crimea in getting everything "ship-shape and Bristol fashion," and in settling the preliminaries of social intercourse during the voyage. The passengers were growing practically familiar with their strange *entourage* and with each other's faces.

For some reason, never made clear to the uninitiated, the great ship slacked her speed when fairly in the Irish Sea, and at last came to a dead stop for several hours. The stewardess told the ladies that the engineer was oiling the machinery, the officers invented other nonsense for inquisitive male passengers,—the truth being that the machinery was not in good order. It had been examined in Liverpool and pronounced

competent for the voyage, but it was advised that the *Crimea* should go into dock immediately on her arrival at New York, and be thoroughly overhauled by the workmen of the company.

All this, however, was not known beyond the engine-room, excepting to the captain and chief officer; but it became evident to any one capable of calculation that the ship, due at Queenstown in about eighteen hours, would not be off the Cove of Cork till late in the afternoon of the next day, Sunday.

"I am sorry I did not engage my passage in the Cunard Line," said one of the passengers.

"If a voyage begins unlucky it will end so," said another.

"It is unluckier to turn back," was the answer.

"And this trouble is not one of any consequence. It is only a little bolt, the engineer says, that is out of order."

"She's an American ship, and her owners can overhaul her much cheaper in New York, provided they can patch her up to run this voyage."

"Who owns her?"

"Well, a company. Old Peter Engels is president. They say he owns about half the shares."

"Then we may feel ourselves quite safe: his only daughter is on board."

“ Moore is a very careful captain. I should feel perfectly secure with him at any time.”

“ And the Crimea is a first-class boat, though old-fashioned in her accommodations. I’ve made three voyages in her.”

Such was some of the talk circulating that afternoon in the smoking-room and the saloon of the steamer. Once on board, it is a matter of loyalty to put faith in the captain and the vessel. Those who had experience remembered how safe previous voyages had been ; those who had none, supposed that to worry about the safety of the ship was part of the customary disquietude of a sea-voyage.

Meantime the captain, officers, and engineers were really anxious, though they reassured everybody and made light of the delay. They, however, considered the ship perfectly safe, and apprehended nothing worse than a little extra trouble and detention on the voyage.

At dinner Colonel Wolcott discovered that his place as Joseph Dobson was far removed from the seats of the aristocracy, who ate their meat at the captain’s table. His wife’s seat, though now vacant, was beside the captain’s chair, for—as daughter of Mr. Engels, and travelling by herself—she was in an especial manner under his protection. At the captain’s table, too, were Mrs. Tontine and her party. He had leisure now to

notice his old flame. How changed since he had seen her! Was it possible that he ever could have wasted passion, hope, happiness, upon that ill-bred, fussy, faded woman, who seemed to have retained nothing of her former self but her worldliness, her unmodulated voice, her love of being conspicuous at any price, and of attracting the attention of every male creature who came in her way?

She had an English governess in her train, and an over-dressed, sallow little girl, about the age of Lance,—a child devoid of every charm which we associate with the idea of childhood. No tender reminiscence of baby days clung or could cling to her pinched little features and pert, aggressive manner. Those lips could never have cooed music, one would think, even to a parent's ears, those hands never have bestowed endearing baby pats, nor those sallow cheeks invited kisses. Her earliest utterances must have been querulous, impatient screams; her first thoughts have been lisped, not in the sweet, imperfect nouns and verbs of infancy, but in vulgar, wilful, unpardonable bad English.

Colonel Wolcott looked at her with a bitter kind of scorn,—a swelling of the heart, such as mothers often feel when, comparing their own fledglings with alien broods, they thank Heaven for not having given them that other woman's child.

From the remote table at the further end of saloon, at which fate and the head steward had consigned him to the society of *commis-voyageurs* and bag-men, the colonel could watch what went on at the table of the captain, and observe the flirtations of "that Tontine widow," as she was called by some of the people round him, who had made a previous passage in her company. She must have been a widow for some time, for her grief was passing off into black silk and bugles and an infinitude of *crêpe lisse*.

As to the child, — Harrie they called her, — Colonel Wolcott thought he had never seen anything so disagreeable, forward, impertinent, and intolerable. He was positively relieved when the roll of the vessel proved too much for her, and she and her governess disappeared from table.

As Joseph Dobson, he found himself saddled in his state-room by a chum, — a lad of sixteen, shipped by his friends to the United States, to make his way to fortune if he could, or (far more probably) to perish at the outset, in some New York hospital, of friendlessness and dissipation.

He was desperately sea-sick, in that stage of the ignominious malady when the patient is furious with himself for ever coming to sea, and would give all he owns to behold a reef or hear a breaker. Every other moment he kept implor-

ing "somebody" to fling him overboard, that somebody being generally a low-bred, loud acquaintance made in the smoking-room, who stepped in now and then to see how he got on, and to administer brandy-and-soda and sarcastic observations. Neptune had overlooked his organism as yet, and he met his friend's deplorable entreaties with a laugh, offering to get the steward to bring him a Welsh rabbit, a slice of fried ham, or a box of sardines,—brutal propositions, at which the victim groaned.

The Crimea was again upon her way, but the swell had sent every lady to her cabin, except the very few who, under the influence of evil advice as to "fresh air," and "keeping the deck bravely," were expending endurance worthy of a better cause in making themselves objects of loathing, misery, and aversion to other people.

There are certain afflictions of the human system, cruel and powerful afflictions too, which never assume the dignity of suffering. They might be called the comic maladies which flesh is heir to, were it not impossible to associate the word "comic" with any kind of suffering.

The rancid smells of smoke and "stewing oil" make the quarter-deck of a steamship, whenever the wind is at all against her, almost intolerable; and steamers, besides the roll common to ships at sea, have a tremulous, unrhythmic jar from

their machinery, which to some people is more trying than the ordinary pitch and toss of a laboring vessel. Still, who, in the present quarter of the nineteenth century, would take his passage in a sailing ship instead of a steamer? Something is due to the civilization we live under, and that civilization precludes sails.

Colonel Wolcott, just off a sea-voyage, and not constitutionally disposed to sea-sickness, walked the wet decks, and thought over his situation. The Crimea seemed to be steaming past "the land of fog and mist." A darkness that could be felt was settling down upon them. There was a dismal drip from every yard and sail, and each far-off fog-bell on the coast was answered by a horrible steam-shriek, as if the mighty creature were in pain or peril.

Foggy and chilly as it was, two ladies, after dark, stole out on deck, and Captain Moore, after some protests, made them comfortable in a little cubby-house, appropriated to his own use, on the poop, where he worked his observations, and kept various little private matters,—liqueurs, extra fine cognac, cigars, the medicine-chest, photographs of those he loved at home, his books, and a few papers.

Colonel Wolcott was on the guards outside, where the ship's dog, a creature privileged to wander at will about the decks, still kept him

company; and as the ladies talked with unmodulated voices, and took no precautions against being overheard, he did not feel himself obliged to leave his sheltered corner, out of reach of the spray and drip, in order to be beyond the sound of their conversation.

"They say we stopped because both wind and tide were dead against the ship," said one of them, who piqued herself on being a good sailor. "I thought it was all nonsense about oiling the machinery. The captain says we shall not be off Queenstown till to-morrow afternoon."

"Well," said the other, accepting the wind and tide theory, "I am not sorry myself for the delay. Did you ever land at Queenstown?"

"Yes; it is lovely in its green, you know, — very Irish and rural, with a bright-blue, beautiful bay."

"Poor Mrs. Wolcott is dreadfully annoyed at the delay," said the first speaker. "She is wild to get home to New York and to see about that divorce suit with her husband. I never saw a woman so cut up as she is about leaving her little boy. I went into her state-room, after dark, and found her lying dressed upon her bed, still sobbing as if her heart would break. That's a beautiful room she has, that bridal state-room, — much too big for a woman travelling by herself. However, Mr. Engels engaged it for the round trip. He has plenty of money."

"Yes; the Engels can afford anything," replied the other.

"What do you know," said the other voice, "about Adela Wolcott and her husband? They write me word she is going to spare no expense to prevent his getting the divorce; but he, it seems, insists on being rid of her. She won't hear of a compromise, nor of an amicable arrangement, which was what he proposed to them through my Uncle Deane. Aunt Deane writes me that she means to defend the suit, and I suppose she brought her boy over to England to put him out of his father's reach if it should go against her."

"So that's what sent her out so mysteriously on the last trip of the Crimea?"

"Yes; she would not even bring a maid with her. Her object was to cover up her tracks, and you can't keep a maid from talking, you know. I never saw a woman so bound up in a child as Adela Wolcott is in that little fellow. She brought him to Newport, when we were all there last summer, because he had had measles or something. They stayed in the same house with us for a week or two. There was a bishop there who used to quote something about her life being bound up in the bundle of life with that of her child. I declare, I do believe that she will die if his father takes him from her. Why can't that

Wolcott come home after his travels, and live respectably, like other people? He could not find a better wife than Adela, and he certainly won't if he gets the one they say he wants."

"I don't believe that any judge would consent to let him have the child if he were made to understand that its father is going to marry a woman like that," was the answer.

"There is no knowing what the law won't do," said Mrs. Hobbs, "nor a man either, for the matter of that, if his wife goes against him. I told Adela just now that she had better give up and make an amicable arrangement, as he told my uncle to propose to her. Then she might stipulate to keep the child, — a compromise, you know. But she flew out at me with her religious notions. 'My dear,' I said, 'that may be all very proper, and I respect the prayer book and the marriage service as much as you do; but I've got some of the old Adam in *me*, — and before I'd cling to a man who wanted to shake me off and to take up with such a flirt as Cora Noble, Mrs. Tontine —' "

Colonel Wolcott's start at this speech prevented his hearing its conclusion, but he heard the answer.

"May be there's not a word of truth in what is said about that, after all. It would be quite like Cora Tontine to set such a report in circula-

tion. I formed a very high opinion of Colonel Wolcott from his book. However, you never do know a man's real points until you see his dealings with women. If Colonel Wolcott can be base enough and foolish enough to divorce his wife in order to take up with that flaunting widow, he deserves what he is safe to get, and nobody need pity him."

"You know, I suppose, that she was his first love, before her marriage, when she was Cora Noble, and jilted him for old Tontine. There was a great fuss over it at the time. Then he married Adela Engels for her money, and turned rabid secesh, swore he would n't live under the Stripes and Stars; and when she refused to go with him to Richmond, through the rebel lines, he deserted her. After the war, he went off to the East Indies, without writing her one line, or taking any notice of the birth of his little boy. The first news she had from him, except his book, was through a letter from Constantinople, sent to my Uncle Deane, requesting him to get up a case for an Indiana divorce."

"Have you heard Mrs. Tontine say that she wrote to Colonel Wolcott as soon as his book came out, and that the next thing she heard was that he was arranging for this divorce? — which leaves it to be inferred that he is ridding himself of his wife to marry her."

“Who told you so?”

“Why, she did. That is, as we say, she ‘kind of did,’ you know. She’s been talking to me half the afternoon, in her state-room. It is next to Adela Wolcott’s, and she kept her door open, on purpose, I think. I tried to stop her once or twice, but it was impossible. I have little doubt Mrs. Wolcott heard every word.”

“There is nothing that Mrs. Tontine would like better, I imagine, than to worry her rival. Well, shall we go in? This fog is taking all the starch out of my clothes; and before I go to bed myself, I want to see Adela, and get her to undress, poor dear! and drink a cup of tea. She told me that she felt so lost and lonesome in that big room by herself. When she came out, she had her little boy. You see, —”

“And this is what I have brought her to!” cried Adela Wolcott’s husband to himself, as the gossips descended the companion. “Alone on this steamer, unfriended; pitied, discussed, and patronized by two such women! And yet it might have been a great deal worse. Their sympathy was all for her, their blame for me. They took her part. They were not unkindly. Cora Noble! Cora Tontine! How dare that detestable woman proclaim herself a rival to my wife, and couple her name with mine? Thank Heaven, if she did write to me, I never had her letter.

And Adela, — if she has heard such stuff, what must she think of me? Divorce! What devil made me think about divorce? The only thing that put it into my head was the idea that it was an easy thing to get in Indiana. We had made a terrible mistake, as it seemed, in marrying at all, and I supposed she would be as glad as I to dissolve the bond and be at liberty. I never dreamed of doing her a wrong. I did not understand marriage. We were both going to be just where we should have been if we had never met, as I imagined. I should be glad to be independent of her family, and she to be freed from a Southerner whose principles she despised. There was a certain pride in giving up her wealth, and she did not care for me, I told myself, and I should be free to choose again, or live 'a youth light-hearted and content,' as I might prefer. I forgot how much I could never give her back. I see it now. In marriage there is no equality between man and woman. The bridegroom receives more than he bestows upon his bride, and if he breaks the bond, he leaves — a ruin!"

He had been walking rapidly up and down in the excitement of these thoughts, and now paused beside the bulwark to look over the ship's side into the heaving water. The night was foggy and starless, with only a sharp gleam of wavering, silvery light upon the wake, under the lights of the steamer.

"No wonder," he resumed, "that she has thrown away my picture; no wonder that she will not mention me to Lance. In what way shall I begin to make her understand that it was not unruly passion, nor treachery such as those women hinted at, that prompted me to propose divorce, but actual thoughtless ignorance and want of consideration? I never saw till now that in divorce the liberty so-called is all the man's, — the whole weight of the broken chain is carried by the woman."

He took a few more restless turns upon the deck, and then paused for another look over the quarter.

"My hopes seem just like *that*," he said, looking down into the troubled sea, and unconsciously repeating the experience of all true lovers.

With that he ascended to the hurricane-deck, on the roof of the saloon, where he found several officers, to whom, as he perceived at once, he was an object of observation and suspicion. He heard one man whisper to another, —

"I told you so. You see, the dog knows what he is. From the moment that he came on board he has had an eye upon him.

"You have grown a long beard in the past two weeks, since you came over with us last voyage, Mr. Dobson," was the remark of the third officer.

"Dobson," thought Colonel Wolcott, "is probably a commercial gent, who crosses and recrosses in the Crimea. Doubtless he is well known to every one on board of her. It would be, therefore, impossible to pass myself off for him."

"I presume I have also changed the color of my beard, and grown a foot taller, sir," he said, "if I may judge by what I saw of Mr. Dobson in Liverpool. I purchased his ticket at the last moment, and with it, I presume, the right to use his name. At any rate, you will find me booked as Dobson on the manifest. How soon do you expect that we shall be off Queenstown?"

CHAPTER VII.

CHURCH AT SEA.

And hard till then, and selfish, I
Was thenceforth naught but sanctity
And service.

PROCTOR, *Faithful Forever.*

THE false Dobson was greatly surprised at breakfast the next morning to hear himself addressed as "Mas' Lancelot" by one of the colored waiters. He gave the man a quick look, which imposed silence, and, after the meal was over, sought him in his pantry.

"Why, Mas' Lancelot, does n't you know Mel — Melchizedeck Quin? Me an' you's been coon-huntin' an' possum-treein' an' giggin' eels an' settin' lines an' diggin' after muskrats, menny's an' menny's an' menny's a night, upon de ole plantation. Laws, Mas' Lancelot, don' tell now you's forgotten Mel, nor dat ar' black Gordon pup you's broke — las' month six years — when you was hidin' in ole Blacksmith Harry's cabin? De ole pup has been a smellin' and a whinin' roun'

your legs ebber sence you comed aboard. 'Pears like he don' know what makes of you. Specs he thinks you an' me an' him 'd be right glad to be back upon de ole plantation. Law sakes! how dem Union soldiers done come 'long an' swep' up all de dogs! Did n't leave a sheep's dog nor a watch dog nor a huntin' dog on de ole place, 'ceps jus' dis pup, 'cos I done hid him — jus' cos you done broke him, Mas' Lance — inside an ole box what I had my bed on. Now I done got him rated ship's dog aboard dis steamer."

"But, Mel," said his old master, after an earnest hand-shaking, "don't you betray me yourself nor let the dog betray me. I am in hiding now, as I was at Blacksmith Harry's before Lee's surrender. You seem to have done well for yourself. How is it with your father?"

"Mas' Lancelot, he done got swep' up by Sherman's march, jus' like de dogs. Got to haulin' something or nudder for a colonel of infantry. An' he hauled, an' he hauled, an' he hauled, an' dat ole colonel was mos' onmerciful, an' kep' a putten an' a putten on his mules, an' nebber done let him an' de mules off until he hauled straight into Washington. Den he took sick, an' went in hospital, an' got discharged, an' could n't do no good day's work; an' what was worse, after he took sick, Government done stole his mules."

"*My* mules, you mean, Mel," said his old master.

"Well, may be so, Mas' Lance. Anyhow, when he took sick, Government got 'em. But whar's you boun' for now, Mas' Lancelot?" he went on, changing the subject. "Seen you come creep — creepin' up de ship's side, 'longside of Miss Adela —"

"Miss Adela! How come you to know Miss Adela?"

"Why, she an' young Mas' Lance come out with us las' voyage. But I known her before, in New York. I seen her in her pa's house, on Fifth Avenue, when I come North, from Georgy. I looked her up in New York. Me an' de pup done look for her in dat ar' big place, an' we foun' her. I tole her how he'd been your pup, an' how you'd raised him, and that I'd been one ob de little darkeys used to play an' hunt with you on de ole plantation. An' Miss Adela an' her pa dey was right good to me; an' I mos' thought young Mas' Lance would have gone wild about dat pup, 'cos his own pa done raised him. An' her ma, too, — his grandma, — she's a right kind old lady. Dey's mighty rich, dey say. Got me dis berth as steward. Jus' wrote a line, an' dey took me right away. Thought I knowed you as you comed aboard, an' de ole pup, too; an' den we bofe got throwed off de scent, an'

could n't fix it nohow, 'cos you stayed on deck while dat ar' ole white-whiskered Englishman an' de captain done handed down Miss Adela to her state-room. Went down into your own state-room after dat, Mas' Lance; saw dat chum o' yourn dog-sick, calling on de under-steward, who got charge of him, for brandy — brandy an' soda. Dat ar' ain't no company for you, Mas' Lance! Seed your name on your portmanteau. Look here, Mas' Lancelot, why is n't you in de bridal state-room with Miss Adela?"

Then, after a pause, as if waiting for an answer, which did not come, he said, —

"Young missee real sweet — an' rich, too, Mas' Lancelot. She make your fortune. What for you don' come home, build up de ole place, an' live like your pa done before de war, in Georgy? Young missee comed out with us las' trip, an' Mas' Lancey. Ah! ain't his mother's heart jus' sot on that young gentleman? Where Mas' Lancey now, sah? Don' know how his mother done persuade herself to part with him. Stewardess done say she crying herself sick down below. Don' you want to go down an' see after her? I'll show you de way —"

"Hush, Mel!" said his master. "You must promise me — we were boys together on the old place before the war, you know — not to whisper who I am to any person on board this ship. You

understand me, — to nobody, especially not to — to my — my — your Miss Adela. Remember, too, Mel, that my name on board this ship is Joseph Dobson. I have a reason for wishing, for a few days, to conceal my own."

"Nothin' done gone wrong, is there, Mas' Lancelot, 'bout dem Union 'ffairs? Heard dey had made it all right for your case in de amnesty?"

"Yes, I am all right as to the government. But now, Mel, remember; mind what I say. Have you told any one I am on board this steamer?"

"No; not one single livin' soul, Mas' Lancelot, — nor I won't! I won't tell no one on dis ship, sartin, sacred sure, sah!"

"Well, Mel, I must trust you. If you keep my secret, I will make it worth while for you. Indeed, you might do Miss Adela and myself great harm at present. Keep a close mouth and a still tongue."

"Mr. Quin, sah, head steward say, See all clar for morning service. New York parson on board. Sunday mornin', sah!" interrupted an inferior steward.

In a moment Mel was at his post, superintending the clearance of the saloon tables, and laying the captain's official Bible and prayer book in the place of honor.

Colonel Wolcott was watching near the door of the saloon, when he saw his wife come up the brass-bound stairs with her prayer book and hymnal in her hand. The Reverend Doctor Danvers was already at his post, and the congregation was assembling. She looked pale and worn, with purple circles round her eyes, and a weary, beseeching expression.

As her unsteady feet ascended the glittering steps of the companion-ladder, he sprang forward, and offered her the support of his arm. She tried to acknowledge the attention with a smile. They stood together for a few moments, gazing at a gray, grim sky overarching a gray, grim, shadowless sea.

The ship was rising and sinking in long opaline swells with a prolonged heave in them, sheering through their crests as they rose under her fore-foot, scattering spray and foam. Each wave, as she surmounted it, glided away under her, crinkled and dull green, till she sank into another opaline trough, with another opal-tinted elevation rising before her.

Not a word was exchanged between wife and husband. Their hearts were burthened with unutterable thoughts; and though each was far from guessing what was passing in the mind of the other, each felt magnetic sympathy in the scene before them. They were awed by their

first sense of being out of sight of land, "alone on the wide, wide sea," with no familiar object in sight except the sky above them. "I would as soon make love to a princess on her birthday, before all her court," says Jean Paul, "as worship Nature in the midst of an impertinent, chattering crowd,"—like that, he might have added, which makes up the majority of passengers in an ocean steamer.

"Are you coming to church?" she said, after a few moments' contemplation of the sky and sea. Her tone and smile were an invitation.

He bowed his head, and followed her into the saloon, taking his place beside her.

On the starboard side of the great dining-saloon were assembled such of the ship's company as could be spared for the occasion, dressed in their Sunday toggery, and a detachment of colored stewards in jackets of white cotton. The passengers and officers of the ship took their seats by the port tables. The Reverend Doctor Danvers, an elderly New York clergyman, took the captain's place at the head of the first table, and Captain Moore sat near him, sonorously leading the responses.

So near, and yet so far! The two, once husband and wife, rested their faces on their hands at the same table, and read from the same Book of Common Prayer. He could have said, with the young Puritan,—

“ Long were the prayers the good man said,
But they seemed not long to me,
For in my heart I prayed the while,
And still I prayed for thee.”

as he whispered by her side the first real prayer that he had uttered since boyhood,—that her heart might be moved to forgive him his trespasses, and that God would deliver them both from the evils among which they seemed astray, and give them back to each other and to their child.

We must begin by praying for what we really want, or we shall never learn the worth and power of prayer. We must gradually rise from outward wants to spiritual things. Old age and vigorous manhood alike have their childhood in religious life ; and as the child puts up its little plea in faith for what matured Christians are apt to think inadequate or irreverent things, so those who begin by asking earnestly for what they want, will end, after they have ripened in the Christian life, by raising the tone of their petitions. Great harm has been done to beginners in the habit of prayer, by checking the natural impulses of genuine aspiration.

So Colonel Wolcott, who had learned no prayers beside his mother's knee, and had imbibed German notions of the irrationality of prayer, now thought of his little Lancey, who had lisped an innocent plea for his unknown

father during his perils in Central Asia ; of the prayer that had escaped his wife's lips at the moment of their slight accident between Manchester and Liverpool ; and as he listened to her fervent, broken words, and watched her clasped hands, strained together to give emphasis to her petitions, he added a fervent " Amen ! " to whatever she was asking.

" Give me her love and trust again ! " he prayed. " Grant me her forgiveness and thine own, O gracious Heaven, give me back my wife and child ! "

The clergyman, at the right pause, gave out a hymn from the American Church Hymnal. He had intended to select one of those appointed for services at sea, but in turning to the place, his eyes lighted on another, which seemed appropriate to his intended sermon.

He designated, therefore, the first two verses of the two hundred and sixty-second hymn.

" Mrs. Wolcott," he whispered, " will you do us the kindness to raise the tune ? "

Then for the first time Colonel Wolcott heard the swell of his wife's voice, and knew that she could sing. He had heard her, during their courtship and brief married life, sing silly, sentimental ballads of the kind dear to school-girls ; but now her very soul, like a bird's, seemed poured forth in her notes, and thrilled his heart

with an emotion almost greater than he could bear.

Ah! music penetrates where language cannot pass. In that respect, great are her advantages over eloquence or literature. Music has a part in everything most supreme, most calculated to draw us out of self. She is the voice of nature, both in nature's outward works and in the secret souls of men. She stirs the heart of peasant and of prince alike; she inspires brave men with enthusiasm, and deepens every genuine emotion; she wails over our griefs, she triumphs in our deliverances.

“Safe home, safe home in port!
Rent cordage, shattered deck,
Torn sails, provisions short,
And only not a wreck.
But oh, the joy, upon the shore
To tell our voyage troubles o'er!

“The prize, the prize secure!
The warrior nearly fell,
Bore all he could endure,
And bare not always well;
But he may smile at troubles gone,
And set the victor garland on.”

Twelve lines beneath contempt as verse, so poor that they have been omitted from the last edition of the American Church Hymnal; but united to music and sung by his wife's voice, every line adapted itself to his emotions: no poem, pæan, harmony, or chaunt had ever so excited him.

"But only not a wreck!" exclaimed his heart. "But only not a wreck! I have been wrecking everything worth bringing into port; wrecking her, wrecking Lance, wrecking myself, her motherhood, her happiness, perhaps her honor! And I did it from ignorance — pure ignorance! Wrecked, but not lost! Wrecked, but still able to get into port.

"And oh, the joy, upon the shore
To tell our voyage troubles o'er!"

In a reverie of happiness his soul floated away during the sermon. Doubtless the good doctor gave an excellent discourse, full of comfort and instruction for such of his hearers as were prepared to profit by it; but Colonel Wolcott, almost a heathen, was taking his instruction from a higher source during its delivery.

He was a man of tender, generous impulses, fitted by nature for the enjoyment of domestic life, and the fulfilment of all family claims on his affections. He barely remembered his father, and never had a mother such as his own wife seemed to be to his own son. Wife and child, indeed, his fate had given him, but he had flung the gift away. Yet Adela seemed more his own at that moment than she had done during their brief matrimony of three months, or their subsequent nine years of separation.

One thing, at least, was certain. He asked

far more of marriage now than he had done at first. New cravings, new longings, new possibilities of excellence and delight, opened to his apprehension.

“And only not a wreck!”

That was not all he asked. He panted to refresh himself with happiness, — a happiness that was all new to him, a happiness which, for years past, he had discredited and disdained.

The “youth, light-hearted and content,” the “wandering Arab” of society, now seemed to him a tramp and outcast, either vainly seeking entrance to a better life, or not elevated to the point of understanding what was good for him.

Yet such he felt might still be his own fate, should he lose this new hope. The door might be already shut: she might not rise and open it for him.

“But this, at least, I can do,” he exclaimed in thought, as he looked at his wife’s clasped hands as she prayed to God beside him. “One prayer which she is now praying I can grant. I call on God, who is, the preacher tells us, present in this place, to hear my vow, — that, so far as in me lies, she shall not be parted from her boy, whatever happens; and if she will not let me share him, I will go back — to Asia — into darkness — what matter where?”

The services were over. They ended by an-

other hymn, in which Adela led the singing. The little congregation then dispersed. Adela was handed by the captain on to the guards. Then an entirely new experience came suddenly to her husband. He found her the object of attention to all the gentlemen on deck, and he himself shut out from her society.

Sir George Beevor, Dr. Danvers, Captain Moore, and several New York young men clustered around her ; and when he saw their deference and their devotion, and realized how charming the poor girl he had so long despised could make herself to men of cultivation and taste, his whole heart thrilled with indignation against himself and with an impotent jealousy against the rest of mankind.

CHAPTER VIII.

TO LOVE.

The common spring of all mutual duties, on both sides, must be supposed to be love; that peculiar conjugal love which makes them one will diffuse such sweetness into the authority of the husband, and the obedience of the wife, as will make their lives harmonious, like the sound of a well-tuned instrument; whereas, without that, having such a universal conjuncture of interest in all their affairs, they cannot escape frequent contests and discords; which is a sound more unpleasant than the jarring of untuned strings to an exact ear. All will hold right when love commands and love obeys. ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

AFTER luncheon, such of the passengers as had "sea legs" gathered in groups of twos and threes about the quarter-deck, which in an ocean steamer of the Crimea's build means aft, upon the guards. The sea was too rough for the hurricane-deck; only one officer had ventured there.

Captain Moore had found for Mrs. Wolcott a sheltered nook under the lee of the saloon. The sun was shining, and it had driven away the mist. It was pleasant upon deck, notwithstanding the unusual swell. Adela was seated among sundry smooth and shapely coils of rope, where cushions had been laid for her accommodation, and she

held a book in her hand. She was not reading, however. She had been talking to the captain, and when he was called away by one of the stewards, Mr. Dobson took his place, leaning over her where she sat, and steadying himself by a backstay of the mizzen.

They began by talking about Lance. Adela trembled when her husband first mentioned him. He asked where she had left him.

She answered indefinitely, "At school in England."

Appreciating her reluctance to say more, he put no further questions.

In gratitude for this, and impelled by nervous eagerness to keep speaking of Lance, she allowed him then to lead her into such anecdotes of their boy as are dear to parents' hearts, and she saw with keen delight that he drank in with eagerness every word of information which she vouchsafed him.

She paused at last, and he stood silent by her side, feeling as though he needed time and solitary thought to ponder all he had heard.

After some minutes she got up and walked over to the bulwark. He joined her, and they stood together, looking over the ship's side, watching "the way of a ship in the sea," — one of the greatest of earthly mysteries, thought the most sagacious of mankind.

"I love the sea," she said at length, "and Lancey loves it too. He is a very bold little bather. I took him to Newport last summer. He has never spent a year without seeing the ocean. But this monotony of waters, out of sight of land, fatigues me and destroys my sympathy. The Atlantic that I love is all variety, all wild caprice. One needs the land to stand upon, I think, to see the highest beauty of the ocean."

"Landscapes and seascapes too," said Colonel Wolcott, "need a touch of something human to make them satisfactory. My greatest interest at sea is in observing seamanship. I sympathize with the eternal struggle between sailors and the sea. Every act of seamanship, even the most trivial,—the splicing of a rope, the trimming of a yard,—is so much added to the human side. A timely skill is self-defence, eternal vigilance the price of safety."

"Yes," she replied ; "a ship too seems to me a living thing. One's sympathies are always with the ship and those on board of her. Admire Nature as we may, when a crisis comes in the eternal trial of strength between herself and man, we at once take sides against her."

There was a little pause.

"I delight as much in Newport as you do," he resumed.

Adela trembled. This remark seemed to introduce something personal into the conversation.

"Then you know Newport, Mr. Dobson?" she said after a moment, during which she had deliberated whether she should hasten what must now be coming.

"Old Newport, summer Newport, Newport rocks and Newport fishing-grounds, its island roads, Bateman's, the Glen, Blue Rocks, Paradise, Purgatory, Block Island, Canonicut,—I know them all well!" he answered with enthusiasm.

"I thought in the train that you gave us to understand that you were an Englishman."

"I knew that you supposed me A——, of our prison in the hills," he said. "Nationalities are unstable in these days. I have changed mine so often that now I shall have to make an effort to prove that I have one. All now depends upon the next two weeks with me. I may go abroad forever, and become an Asiatic,—fulfil the destiny sketched in Locksley Hall perhaps. I can imagine circumstances in which that life may be all that will be left me."

"What! take the 'dusky woman'?" Adela replied in a low voice.

"Why not, if all else fails me? If I am wrecked, adrift, if I fail to get safe home in port, what else remains to me? It is not good for man

to be alone. I feel it — *he* felt it. If he adjusted himself to the only existence left, and made himself a shelter out of such rubbish as had come ashore with him, do you blame him?"

"With my whole soul I believe," she said, "that brave hearts can conquer circumstances; that every dreadful thing, when we draw near and confront it, proves less dreadful than it seemed in fancy; and that, if we cannot compel all things to our hopes, we can adjust ourselves to them."

"How do you mean me to understand you when you speak like that? Listen," he said. "This is a crisis in my life. Many years ago I wrecked myself, and lost what might have made me a good man. Not many hours since I saw a prospect of regaining what I threw away. A few days will decide what now becomes of me. Give me your good wishes!"

Adela trembled exceedingly. She flushed and then grew pale, but she stood silent.

"I will pledge myself to nothing unless I fully understand," at length she said.

Of what could he be speaking? Was she herself the object of his hopes, or was it Cora Noble? Was this a stratagem to sound her on the subject of divorce, to commit her unawares to co-operate with his wishes? Was he really hoping to recover his lost happiness by making a second marriage with Mrs. Tontine?

For a brief moment her only wish was that he were free, and that she herself lay deep under the green, grim waves that heaved before her.

"My chances all depend on you," he said, lowering his voice until he whispered in her ear, and speaking rapidly. "If you care nothing for my happiness, think of your boy! How can you part with him? However much I may forbear, that must come some day, you know."

"I understand you now," she said. It was a bribe. She saw it. "I understand, and I dare not, dare not, *must* not encourage what you wish to do. I cannot wish that you should succeed. I am forced to stand in your way, if possible."

"O Mrs. Wolcott, Captain Moore has been saying that's a horrid man! He is quite uneasy about your getting acquainted with him. Dobson is not his name. He has been defaulting or forging or stealing—he is *dreadful*!" broke in Harrie Tontine, pulling hard at Mrs. Wolcott's dress, and speaking in a shrill stage-whisper. Harrie, ever since luncheon, had been racing up and down the deck. "The captain is coming himself to break it up, he says. I heard him and mamma speaking of it together. He said it annoyed him very much. He said, 'I got a hint to shadow him before we started.' What did he mean by that? I don't know what he could mean."

Adela flushed all over, and looked up at her companion. She saw in his face what seemed the shadow of the look he gave her when they parted, ten years before.

"Run away, Harrie!" she said. "The gentleman is my friend. He is well known to me. You should not repeat to me what the captain may have said to Mrs. Tontine."

"How much of this do you believe?" said Colonel Wolcott hoarsely.

"Nothing. But they say on board —"

"That Dobson is a thick-built, bullet-headed, red-faced British bagman. At least, such is the man I saw at Liverpool. I bought his ticket, and am travelling under his name. Before the voyage ends I had hoped to explain it all to you."

He spoke hurriedly, for he saw Captain Moore approaching them, with Sir George Beevor.

"Mrs. Wolcott, we are passing the Tusker. Let me take you over to the other side of the ship. You will see it best under the break of the poop," said the captain.

"And let me offer you my arm," said Sir George Beevor. "I did not know until this moment," he added, as Adela, aided by Mr. Dobson, gathered up her shawls, "that you were the wife of the traveller, Colonel Wolcott. You must be very proud of him. I have read no book for years that has seemed to draw me so closely and

personally to the author. How long has he been in the East, and when do you expect him back?"

"He has been away nine years," she said, "five in the East and four in the Army of the Southern Confederacy. This gentleman," indicating Dobson, "can tell you more about him than I can. He saw him not long since in India."

"Indeed, Mr. Dobson!" said Captain Moore. "Where did you fall in with him?"

"I was with him in the hill fort that he speaks of in his travels."

"Indeed!" cried Sir George. "Then perhaps you are the friend whom he calls A.? Colonel Wolcott's portrait in the 'Illustration' of last week is not what I expected. I had not supposed him so old a man."

Sir George said this as he was moving away with Captain Moore and Adela. Mr. Dobson did not follow them. He remained leaning against the bulkhead, and heard the voice of Mrs. Tontine speaking within the saloon, as she sat in her place over the lunch-table.

"I don't know what Dr. Danvers and other people mean by always holding up Adela Wolcott as the model of a woman, in her situation. There she is flirting with the only Englishman of rank on board, and there's that doubtful person with an enormous beard, who don't seem able to keep

his eyes off her. It is all very well for us lost sinners to amuse ourselves, — there is nothing to be done at sea but to flirt and to eat, and to play whist or chess or euchre, — but for the saints to take the game out of our very hands seems *un peu fort*, don't you think so?"

"Not *too* bright and good,' you know, Mrs. Tontine, is one of a woman's perfections," said a young man who was near her.

"Oh, hush up, Mr. Offley! You men always take up for Mrs. Wolcott. Well, she is going to be divorced in a few weeks, — if indeed she is not divorced already, — and with her face and her fortune she will be a splendid speculation for some of you. She made her first husband wretched, — these extra good women have a knack of being uncomfortable to the men who own them, — but that will not be taken into account by her aspirants."

"I heard she was going to defend the suit. Mrs. Hobbes told me so," said Mr. Offley. "Mrs. Hobbes seemed to think that it was not her wish to be parted from so distinguished a husband."

"Mrs. Hobbes believes anything she is told! She does not make allowances for Adela Wolcott's temper. *I* would n't be the woman to hang on to a man who did not want *me*, *I* know! I never saw good come of it. I always think such women, when they are ill-treated, get about what they deserve from their husbands."

"Ah! you mean when a woman is engaged to a man who wants to break it off, and she keeps him to his engagement, — a sort of genteel breach-of-promise case? But this is different. Here is positive obligation. I suppose, Mrs. Tontine, you agree with Mr. Froude in his judgment on King Henry VIII., and Queen Katharine, — that it is not good taste for a woman to cross her husband, if he takes a fancy to get rid of her."

"Oh! as to Henry VIII., I quite agree with Mr. Froude and everybody. He was a wretch, a regular royal Bluebeard, — *that* we all know," cried Mrs. Tontine, who thought herself upon safe ground as to that fact in history. "But Colonel Wolcott never was like Henry VIII. He was charming as a bachelor; and Adela, however much you men all rave about her now, was not at all the woman to get on with him. He was fastidious about women. It was a mere *mariage de convenance*. By the way, have any of you read his book? Is n't it lovely?"

Then, after a pause: —

"I wonder if she has read it! I would like to find out what she thinks of it. Mr. Offley, give me your arm. Suppose we go on deck and see the Tusker? I should like to get her to talk about Colonel Wolcott and his book. It would be fun."

Pursuant to this plan, Mrs. Tontine, five min-

utes afterwards, came forth on the guards, in a *nube* and a waterproof, leaning on Mr. Offley's arm, Mel carrying a camp-stool behind them.

"Ah! Sir George," she said, as she placed herself beside him and his companion, "do not let me spoil an agreeable *tête-à-tête*. It would be mean of me; for if you spend this winter in New York, you will find Mrs. Wolcott the acknowledged belle of the season. We are all in dread of her. I don't mean widows on small means, *passées*, like myself, — *we* have no chance to enter into competition with her freshness and her fortune, — but her *débüt* in society is dreaded by young ladies in their teens. She is to be the First Prize this winter in the New York lottery of marriage."

"Don't, if you please, Mrs. Tontine," said Adela, moving away at once. "I am not going into society. Such remarks are very disagreeable to me."

"Oh! my dear, you have not been much in society hitherto, because of your position; but things will be very different when you are free. Why, with all your advantages, you may do anything you please. You have no *i-dea* what a career you have before you. They say," she added, turning to Sir George Beevor, "that to be generally talked about is a passport to success in America. Keep your name before the public, no matter how, and it wins you half your battle."

"Indeed, Mrs. Tontine," said Adela, "I am only anxious to keep my name away from the public."

"If you expect to do so, my dear, in connection with Colonel Wolcott, — a man whose fame is on everybody's tongue, now-a-days, — I can assure you that you are mistaken. Why, your history will point the moral of every strong-minded woman's speech on the anti-husband question. You need not expect privacy henceforth until you seek it in another marriage."

"Mrs. Tontine, do me the kindness to let my affairs alone, — at least in my hearing."

"Indeed, my dear, forgive me! I did not mean to rouse your temper. I forgot you were so easily excited. I supposed, of course, your indignation was all for Wolcott, poor man!"

Adela at this moment became mesmerically aware, without being able to see her husband's face (for a short-sighted person cannot catch the eye as others do), that he was earnestly attentive to the conversation. It seemed an opportunity for explanation. Roused to defend herself, she stood at bay.

"Mrs. Tontine," she said, "I do not care who knows what I think upon this subject. The divorce to which you allude is not of my seeking. I wholly disapprove of it. I abhor and reject the whole system of divorce, for anything except

a Scriptural reason. I lament that it prevails in our country. When I vowed a vow to love, honor, and obey my husband until death, I meant to keep it."

"Yes; but one does not always love, and one cannot always honor. All marriages are not love-matches. Perhaps love —"

"That depends on what you mean by love. What *does* a woman mean when she promises to 'love' in her marriage-vow, Mrs. Tontine?"

"Why, of course she means she is in love with him," said Mrs. Tontine, remembering rather reluctantly her own relations with Mr. Tontine.

"I don't think that she necessarily means *that*. If she did, half the marriage-vows would be perjury."

"Why, Mrs. Wolcott! Oh, if you come to that! — Well, I suppose, from *your* point of view — but I should not have thought — to be sure, you were very young!"

"I trust that there are many women so happy as to be 'in love,' in the fullest sense of novelist or poet, when they stand up to be married. But indeed it would be very hard to define what it is to be in love, — how much glamour, how much reality, how much inexperience, how much excited feeling make up *enough* to justify our being called 'in love.' There are Methodists who have found it hard to teach how much faith and

fervency it takes to authorize a man to call himself a Christian. I think, Mrs. Tontine, that our marriage-vows, like our religious vows, are not so much *I am*, as *I will be*. We vow with purpose of heart that we *will* love. We bind ourselves to see that nothing in ourselves, or our own history, or in the man to whom we pay our vows, shall make it impossible for us to keep our word. We make love, all through our married life, a solemn obligation, to be maintained, nourished, and increased, so far as may be, every day. The girl who only vows, *I am in love*, may possibly fall out of love, or find herself mistaken. Thousands do this, and live to feel their vows a falsehood, their hopes wrecked, and their lives ruined. But there are those who, having vowed *I will love*, love, notwithstanding all discouragements, to the end. To him that hath shall be given. In the hearts of those who love at all, love will increase by cultivation. It may change its nature. It may become, in sickness or in weakness, a protecting love, or in adversity, a helping one, or in ill-usage, a long-suffering one; but if the vow was made in truth, love will be love from the wedding to the funeral. It is a far less solemn thing, I think, to vow *I do love*, than *I will*."

"Well!" cried Mrs. Tontine, "to think of your advocating marriage without being in love!"

"I don't. I am arguing for increasing love after marriage, as I would argue for increasing faith after the vows of confirmation."

"But 'honoring and obeying,' Mrs. Wolcott. There's the rub, for most women," said young Offley, who was interested in the conversation. "I never could see why every rascal who is a married man should have a woman pledged to honor him."

"Because you supposed, possibly, a woman pledged herself not to know right from wrong in favor of her husband. I do not see that women are pledged to hoodwink their own moral sense ; but I do think we are all bound to do everything that may promote the honor of our husbands, either by our counsels, our reticence, or our behavior ; and experience shows, I think, that a woman who complains of her husband, or gossips about him, dishonors herself. Husband and wife are too intimately one for either party to claim sympathy either for himself or herself at the expense of the other. If the honor of either is tarnished, the honor of the other feels the stain. Granted the honor and the love, the obedience follows. The sequence is easily maintained."

"Well!" said Mrs. Tontine, as Adela, attended by Sir George, walked away, "'Set a thief to catch a thief!' It takes a woman who

can't live with her husband to lecture other women on the duties of married people. But I must say I don't think it at all a nice thing for her to be taking up with any casual admirer, like that tall man who slouches his hat till you see nothing but his beard. I declare, he watches till you would suppose he was trying to charm her, like a snake. I hear he is aboard under a false name, and the officers of the ship think he is some kind of forger or defaulter."

"In that case, the police may have him out of the ship at Queenstown," said Mr. Offley. "Such a thing happened to a man the last time I crossed the ocean going home. He had got Lady Somebody's jewels stowed away in his valise. I heard afterwards that they sent him to the hulks for fourteen years. He imposed upon all of us until that came about. He, like this Dobson, seemed to us on board a very quiet, gentlemanly fellow."

CHAPTER IX.

TO HONOR.

Giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel. This seems at first a little incongruous. Honor, because weaker. But not when we consider the kind of honor. The weaker the vessels be, the more tenderly they should be used. Yea, the tie of marriage makes of two, one. That which is part of ourselves, the more it needs we do it honor.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

WE once heard it asserted at a missionary meeting that tobacco and printed Bibles came almost simultaneously into the civilized world. "Alas!" exclaimed the orator, "in four centuries, men out of all the nations under heaven are confirmed smokers, whilst —" We omit his deduction, and take up the defence of the great luxury of mankind.

Tobacco, then, is the sedative of the restless portion of the human race. By smoke, men work off their superfluous energies; it is to them what sewing is to women. We admit that it has interfered with activity and individual greatness; we concede that since tobacco came into universal use in Christendom, very great men seem

to have gone out of use : but, allowing that the world since that period has had few men great as Raleigh or Columbus, we submit that these were not votaries of the Virginia weed. Frederick the Great abhorred the Tobacco Parliaments of Frederick William. Napoleon took only an occasional pinch of snuff. The lips of the great Oliver never closed upon a pipe-stem. Is all this an argument in favor of tobacco? We think it is. Individual activity has diminished, like individual learning ; but generalized activity, the activity of co-operation, the activity of the age we live in, is so tremendous that, were its forces guided by men of such energy as the pre-tobacconists of the sixteenth century, the world would become a pandemonium of unrest, even less fit than it is now for quiet folks to dwell in. Let us bless the glorious memory of the great Sir Walter for a wholesome corrective to the spirit of the nineteenth century, and be thankful that as much progress as the world can bear is committed to the impaired nervous energies of a tobacco-loving generation.

In the smoking-room of an ocean steamer, first-class and second-class smokers meet under one clouded atmosphere ; social distinctions, as in a smoking-car, are suspended, if not done away.

It was in the smoking-room of the Crimea that

Sir George Beevor and Mr. Dobson met half an hour after the scene between Mrs. Tontine and Adela. The latter had sought refuge in her state-room, and the ship was nearing Queenstown, in full sight of the emerald shore.

"I think these Americans," said Sir George meditatively, knocking the ashes from the end of his cigar, "'do beat all nature,' as they say themselves, in their manners and customs."

Any observer knows that an Englishman who quotes the slang of America adopts specimens of the strongest kind, acquired from the "Sam Slick" papers in "Blackwood," written forty years since, or Bird o' Freedom Sawin. "Catawompously chewed up," for example, is, we understand, held in England to be a common household expression in America. Provincialisms exist, of course, in all parts of our country, and distinguish the many nationalities that find shelter under our Stripes and Stars; but slang is ever shifting. The versatile American invents a bold, strong word to suit the purpose of the moment; and when the occasion is past, it drops out of the popular vocabulary almost as suddenly as it appeared in it. Which of us now-a-days employs the word "skedaddle," unless he be an Englishman, trying to appear *au fait* in the idioms of our late war?

"Did you ever walk into your own *sanctum*,

after some officious hand had been putting it to rights," said Dobson, "and find yourself startled by small changes in its arrangements, whereas, were you entering the room for the first time, these little things would not have caught your notice. It is just so with Americans and Englishmen. They are so much alike that every difference tells."

"I did not mean to allude to points of nationality, exactly," said Sir George. "It is the tone of things around me on one subject that surprises me, as shown even in the limited society of this steamer. That Mrs. Tontine —"

"The Widow Tontine is vulgar," broke in Mr. Offley. "You must not take her as a specimen of the well-bred American lady. That you may find in Mrs. Wolcott. Mrs. Tontine was a New York belle in her youth; and if that does not graduate a woman in vulgarity, nothing else will. To attain eminence as a belle at Springs and watering places a girl must put up with loss of privacy and loss of delicacy, and be willing to accept the homage of all sorts and conditions of men; she must smile on those she cannot but despise, and laugh with those she hates, and jilt the man she loves and marry the man she loathes. And that's the history of Mrs. Tontine!"

"But such notions of divorce," persisted Sir George, "seem hardly credible. Here is the

traveller Wolcott, a man who impressed me most favorably in his book, and a lady who, according to your own account, is a favorable specimen of what is best in American society, applying for divorce, and people talking of it — actually before the lady's face — and speculating as to whom she will next marry, as if such pussy-wants-a-corner work was a thing that could astonish no one in American good society. It strikes me very strangely."

"There are such instances, of course," said Offley, "and you have chanced on one, Sir George; but you won't meet with a divorce case every day in your travels in America."

"But tell me," said Sir George, "will this poor lady, Mrs. Wolcott, hold such a position in society, after her divorce, as Mrs. Tontine seems to predict she will? Won't she be rather — under a cloud, I mean? Won't people, 'be she as chaste as ice, as pure as snow,' attach some blame to her?"

"Blame to *her*!" cried Mr. Dobson, with a sudden burst of energy, which, for a moment, rather surprised the other two.

"I hardly think they will," said Offley, "unless the divorce case brings out something. Of course, if a man wants to divorce his wife, it is the business of his lawyer to make it as bad as he can for her; and in this case, the parties being

so widely known, it will be the interest of the newspaper men to make the most of their affairs for the amusement of the public. I expect to see nothing but 'The Great Wolcott Divorce Case,' for several weeks after I get home."

"Good heaven! And her name, of course, on everybody's tongue! Can this disgrace be brought, without a cause, upon a woman by a man who put his honor in her hands, who vowed to love and uphold and cherish her?" cried Sir George, with indignation. "What is one to think of a man willing to drag a woman through the publicity—if not the foulness—of a thing of this kind?"

There was something in Joseph Dobson's eyes so very fierce that Sir George stopped suddenly.

"Excuse me," he said, "for forgetting that Colonel Wolcott is your friend. You met him in the East, I think you told me. But all this seems to me so very strange, you know."

At that moment Harrie Tontine's sharp face loomed through the thick atmosphere of the smoking-room.

"Mr. Offley! Mr. Offley!" she cried shrilly. "You said you'd come and teach me how to hop along the deck, when you had done your luncheon, and I've been waiting for you ever so long."

"I'll come when I have done my smoke, Miss Harrie," said Offley.

"No, I want you to come now. Come right away!" commanded Harrie.

"Look here!" said one of the officers of the ship, "this is not a place for little girls. Ladies, Miss Harrie, are not allowed in the smoking-room."

"Oh!" said Harrie, "I don't object to smoke. I think I shall often come."

"I wish some philanthropist out of employment would get up a society for the protection of grown-up Americans from other people's children," muttered Offley.

"Ah! that's what we all need, and what we shall get less and less of, as mothers enlarge their rights and spheres," said one of the party.

"Well, now," said a reactionist from Puritanism, a philosopher of the New England school, "it has always appeared to me that if parents persist in repressing a spirit of investigation, they stunt their children's intellectual growth."

"Not a bit more so, my dear sir, than you injure your vines by trimming off their shoots. Shorten the twig and you improve the fruit. It is a question with me whether intellectual development be the highest consideration in forming men and women; for the highest development, I take it, should consist in making the human creature as perfect as possible to the limit of his capacity. You must bring out all that lies latent

in the man himself, and make the most of it, — cultivate his heart, his intellect, and his bodily frame.”

The speaker was one of those obnoxious persons who, at unsuitable times and especially on shipboard, love to enunciate sonorous platitudes as if they were discoveries, and to provoke long-winded discussions.

By this time Harrie Tontine was established on a table, wriggling her unshapely legs, and trying to get Offley to let her have a puff at his cigar.

Colonel Wolcott gazed at her with compassion and horror.

“And that child,” he thought, “that dreadful little imp, with apparently no instincts of her sex or age, might be my own daughter had I married the woman on whom I threw my raw, boyish love away!”

“You were talking of Mrs. Wolcott just now,” said the Crimea’s officer. “She came out with us last voyage, and had with her one of the finest little boys I ever saw in all my life. The little fellow was all over the ship, and wherever he went it was a pleasure to see him. He was a child brought up never to be an offence to other people. Full of his questions, — but then they were intelligent questions, that led to something; and he was eager to listen to whatever you had to say

in reply. Listening is what makes children's minds grow, Miss Harrie; don't you know that? That's what you have two ears for."

"Mamma says that Lance Wolcott is going to be immensely rich; and when I grow up I mean to marry him," said Miss Harrie positively.

"Marry Lance Wolcott! Heaven forbid!" cried Mr. Dobson with energy.

"You'll have to learn to be real nice, Miss Harrie, 'fore dat time come," remarked Mel, who was passing through the smoking-room, giving a wink to his master. "My Mas' Lance Wolcott ain't for any little lady who sits cross-legged on a table afore gentlemen in a smoking-room."

Harrie flared up.

"I am good enough for Lance Wolcott any day in the week," she cried. "And what's more, my mamma's maid, that we left in England, says my mamma is going to marry his papa after he gets a divorce and she gets home!"

A roar of laughter from the men around greeted this communication.

"Tell us some more, Harrie! This is rich!" cried several of the young men in the smoking-room, whose sense of honor was not fully grown.

Mortified, indignant, ashamed of himself and of his own position, Colonel Wolcott flung away his cigar and quitted their company.

CHAPTER X.

TO CHERISH.

And I rehearsed my marriage vow,
And swore her welfare to prefer
To all things, and for aye as now
To live not for myself, but her.

COVENTRY PATMORE, *The Espousals*.

MEANTIME Adela Wolcott, aglow with the excitement of her conversation with her husband, and her subsequent encounter with Mrs. Tontine, went down into her state-room. There she flung herself upon a seat beside the bed, clasped her hands over her face, and hid it in the pillows.

Doubts, fears, and emotions tossed her to and fro, till her whole soul seemed like a troubled sea. What did her husband mean by all he had said to her? His incognito was the incognito of a royal personage, meant only to mislead those whom it was convenient to deceive. It was not to hide him from herself, that was certain. Did it hide him from others? Did it hide him from Mrs. Tontine?

He had said, "All hangs upon the next two

weeks with me. I may go abroad forever and become an Asiatic. I may take the dusky woman for my companion, in my despair. If I am wrecked, adrift, why not? This is a crisis in my life. Many years ago I wrecked myself, and lost what might have made me now a good and happy man. Not many hours since I saw the chance of winning back my blessings. A few days will decide my fate."

But did this really mean, as it had at first seemed, that he was asking her consent to the divorce in order to regain lost happiness by marrying his first love? Was she not wronging and dishonoring her husband by imagining him capable of the trickery of wresting her words to his own advantage, and bribing her to wrong her sense of right by offering her the custody of Lance if she withdrew all opposition to his second marriage?

The situation, as she conceived it, was that he had proposed divorce, through Mr. Deane, to herself and to her family; that he had been advised that she intended to oppose it; and that he was now anxious, under the partial shelter of an assumed name, to conduct in person a negotiation which might induce her to consent to an amicable compromise. She had no idea that the only news he had received from Mr. Deane was the result of that lawyer's first interview with Mr.

Engels, which had never been fully made known to her ; and that the lawyer had informed his client that his wife and her family were as ready as he could be to break off the marriage.

Doubtless he had come on board incognito to make the voyage with the woman whom he loved and lost before he had ever known herself. A woman's theories, when she makes up her mind not to trust her inspirations, usually deceive her.

The notion that Mrs. Tontine was his object, that the desire to be in her company without scandal had brought him on board the *Crimea*, seemed plausible at first ; but still, as she thought it over, the instinct that dictates a woman's impressions before she has had time to bewilder herself in all the *pros* and *cons* of argument, told her differently. A line from Browning shimmered through her memory, —

“Let's trust the motive that we cannot see.”

Might not his motive be herself ? she reflected. Was it not more consistent with the character with which she had invested him ? She knew that their hearts had “beat to one measure” as they talked of little Lance.

“And yet I do not understand,” she inly cried, “what he can mean by placing me and himself in our present position. If he hated or de-

spised me, I should know it quickly enough: of that I am certain. My impressions are accurate though I see so imperfectly. He must know that I am ready — ah! too ready — to respond to any word of reconciliation.

“The law people have talked to me till they have made me so suspicious, so afraid, so little like myself, that I hardly know what I am doing. Oh, how I wish I could have seen his eyes when we were talking on the deck! But there were tones in his voice, and his breath stirred my hair, and — O Lancelot! husband! how I could love you, live for you, if I had you back again! I would be anything you pleased if you would — if you would love me — would come home, give me a chance to show —”

She paused, rose, and stood for a moment, with clear, open eyes and a set face, looking through her port-hole at the heavens. Then, as the tears rose and her lip trembled, she cast down her eyes, clasped both her hands, and said, half whispering to herself, —

“Nothing will bring us into port but my doing what is right, — nothing but following, under Divine direction, the straightforward path. There is no use in trying to change things, in thinking that one could be happy under new conditions. O God, make Thy way plain before my face! ‘Tarry thou the Lord’s leisure,’ is His own

counsel. Some day I shall be able to see — we both shall, perhaps — that all this was His way of blessing us, little as we guessed it.”

Occupied by these reflections, recalling the past, strengthening herself and exonerating her husband, Adela paid little attention to the noises overhead, which betokened that something was going on on board the vessel.

The Crimea had entered the Cove of Cork, and was now nearing Queenstown.

Glancing through her port-hole, she saw what seemed a lovely picture set in a circular frame. The green shore was not far off; the ribbon-like line of sandy beach lay under the gradual slope of the low cliffs, with small white villas gleaming through their greenery.

Was it possible, she thought, that even Lance's father had been able to put Lance out of her thoughts, — that she had entered Queenstown harbor without once recollecting that there she was to meet a telegram, telling how the child bore her absence, and if he were safe and well?

She called the stewardess. That personage, Roxana Young by name, though better “raised” than Mel, who had been country-bred in Georgia, was pleased to permit the attentions of that gentleman; and there were love-passages going on every day, in odd corners of the ship, between

them. Roxana was a flirt by nature, temperament, and example, having been brought up as maid to some young ladies of good family. She was an excellent stewardess, devoted to the captain and the ship, faithful to her duties, tender, neat-handed, and intelligent ; but, notwithstanding the various wants of her "ladies," sick or well, she found time and opportunity for carrying on with Melchizedeck her favorite pastime. She would have been lost without a beau to "wait upon" her : never had she been without one since she entered girlhood, though she had no particular inclination to be married, and indeed believed firmly in "wise virgins." She was not a settled woman, as she owned. Managing the men of her own race came as natural to her as taking care of helpless passengers ; and life would have seemed blank to her without white ladies to look after and a lover of her own color to tyrannize over. Mel was lighter of hue than herself, being, as she described it to her intimates, "a real pretty cream color ;" but while she had long hair, silky, crimped, and glossy, his was frizzled, like the wool of the blackest negro. It was a sad drawback to a bright mulatto to have woolly hair ; and one way in which Roxana kept her hold upon Melchizedeck was never to let him forget her sense of this misfortune.

Mrs. Wolcott called from the state-room, and, giving her some money, said, —

“Roxana, when the ship stops, how shall I get a telegram? I expect one to meet me at Queens-town, about my little boy.”

“I don’ know as Captain Moore means to go up to the town,” said Roxana. “I heard him saying that he did not want to lose time, and that he’d rather not give any one the chance to go ashore. I ’specs he’ll have signalled for the tender to come off and bring aboard the mails and passengers. Then at the same time they’ll send the telegrams.”

“Will you look out then, Roxana, and bring me mine the moment that it comes?” said Adela. “I cannot go down to the gangway myself, and I want it as soon as possible after it is brought on board.”

“Yes, certainly I will, Mrs. Wolcott. Jus’ you trust me. Won’t you go on deck yourself now, and see the harbor of Queenstown? My ladies always thinks it’s a pretty sight as the ship runs in.”

“No, I believe not, Roxana. Bring me my telegram here. There will be everybody on deck. So many people!”

She sat down, counting each beat of the machinery, which kept time to the throbs of her own heart, and for a little while all thoughts of

her husband, of Cora Noble, the divorce, and her present position, were lost in a sort of reactionary anxiety for news of the child, whom she had left drowned in tears the day before, at the house of a Liverpool clergyman, whose wife was in the habit of taking Indian children as lodgers and pupils.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TELEGRAM.

A shadow seemed to rise
From out her thoughts, and turn to dreariness
All blissful hopes.

J. R. LOWELL, *Legend of Brittany*.

THE wail in "The Isle of Beauty" — that farewell song to England which is almost a national anthem — is for "one green leaf to look upon" when far at sea. Nature has provided, by innumerable varieties of green (more than four hundred shades, they say) for the natural craving of the eyes for this color. The want of vivid green — of "living green," as Isaac Watts has called it — is one of the items that make up the sum of human misery in a sea-voyage. No sailor, says Ulysses, but begins to yearn for land when he has been a week at sea. And if such were the case with Greeks, who never ventured long out of sight of their own coast, how much more true is it of ocean-going landmen, twenty-six centuries after Homer wrote,

disheartened by sea-sickness, and that systematic compression of everything which is one of the chief discomforts of a voyage?

The captain had already stated, at dinner and on deck, that he should lay to only long enough to take in mails and passengers. He did not offer anybody facilities for going ashore at Queens-town. Colonel Wolcott's chum, however, and two other men, went back on the tender, forfeiting their passage-money and sticking the white feather boldly in their caps, rather than endure any longer the fate of all landsmen "who go down to the sea in ships," whose "souls abhor all manner of meat, and are even hard at death's door." Mel took it upon himself to stimulate the terrors of his master's room-mate, being very unwilling that Colonel Wolcott's dignity should be compromised by occupying longer a state-room with "any such person."

As soon as the tender came off shore, a telegraphic agent made his appearance on the quarter-deck, with a bundle of telegrams, and a book to be signed by those to whom they were delivered, — a precaution adopted at that period by the company, to secure itself from too much responsibility in the hurry of delivery.

Roxana, faithful to her promise, was in waiting at the gangway when the people from the tender came on board, not aware that the telegraph.

clerk, being amphibiously bred and an active fellow, had for sport swung himself up by the main chains and got on deck without the accommodation of a ladder.

Mel was the steward appointed to assist him in the delivery of his messages, and followed him about to distribute them to passengers.

"One for Miss Adela," he said in a confidential tone, as he passed Colonel Wolcott.

"Hand it to me," said the colonel, on the impulse of the moment.

"This gen'leman's her husband, so it's all right," said Mel to the clerk who held the book, and put the telegram into his master's hand. It ran thus:—

MRS. WOLCOTT, CRIMEA,—Colonel Wolcott on board. Better land. Go to hotel. Take next steamer. Will meet you to-morrow.

CHARLES SMITH, of Smith & Griffiths.

"Sign for it, sir, if you please," said the clerk impatiently.

"All right," said Colonel Wolcott, and signed with his own name.

The pause was a very brief one. Presently the Crimea was panting on her path again. Before Adela had exhausted reasonable patience, she saw from her port-hole the little tender parting company with the ship, and all communication with the land that held her boy, cut off for ten long days to come. She rushed to the deck,

sending a steward whom she met to find Roxana, who had already gone up to the telegraph clerk and asked if he had a telegram for Mrs. Wolcott, one of her ladies.

"Yes — no. All right it is, Miss Young," said Mel, who stood holding the telegrams for distribution. "Dat ar's all right, dat sartain sure! Nebber you done trouble yo'self. I'll fix that telegram. You don't need to think no more 'bout it. All right, sure."

"Stop talking, Mr. Quin. A lady wants it. It's about her little boy she's left behind in Liverpool. The child was half sick when she came off to us, an' she's a'most worried to death about him since we started."

"Now see here, Miss Roxana, you go right down to Miss Adela, an' I bring you her telegram. Wait by my pantry door. We's hard times readin' all de names, we've got such a lot dis mornin'."

Roxana repressed a remark about her certainty that there were no names *he* could read; for it was not consistent with her dignity to disparage in public the intellectual attainments of her lover. She had a comfortable conviction also that Mel would do his best for her in any emergency, and was not aware that in this matter an influence more potent than her own was strong upon him. So she waited by the pantry door till he joined her.

"Where's my telegram, Mr. Quin?" said Roxana.

"See yere, Miss Young," said Melchizedeck, "don' you say a word now, 'cos I have n't got no telegram for Mrs. Wolcott, — my Miss Adela."

"No telegram! She made so sure of one. Wasn't there none? I'll go and ask the clerk myself. Whatever did you keep me foolin' round this door for, waitin' for you?"

"No, no! Don' go now, Miss Roxie. You see, it's too late anyhow. Done cast de tender off 'fore I left de deck an' done come here for you."

"Do you mean to tell me that there was n't nothing for *her*? She'll be ready to cry her eyes out — and she's cried enough already, poor thing. I said I'd ask for it myself. That's what comes of trusting you, Mel Quin! Any nigger with wool like you's got has nebber got no sense in his head. I'll have no more to do with you."

"O Miss Roxie, you *is* a talkin' now, is n't you?" said Mel, trying to get hold of the reluctant taper fingers. "Well, if you won't tell no one, I'll tell you. Dere *was* a telegram, an' somebody as wants to gib it her himself has got it. There now!"

"Who's that? Who signed the book for it? You've got no business, Mr. Quin, a foolin'

about telegrams. You better done let such important things alone. Who is it has got that telegram? You tell me, or I'll go right off an' inform Mrs. Wolcott an' the captain. That's what I'll do."

"No, don't yer, Miss Roxie! Hear me ask yer, *please* don't now. Don't make no fuss at all 'bout it. Let 'em done fix it dere own way. It's all gwine to come right. You done let de telegram alone. Jus' do as I asks you for a bit. I knows all 'bout it. 'Specs you does n't know."

"Who's got it then? Tell me! Is it that Dobson that keeps eying her? Tells yer what, Melchizedeck Quin, I ain't used to have no gentlemen like that foolin' roun' any my ladies. My ladies don't have nothin' to do with folks which has false names, like that Dobson. Everything 'bout them is fust-class, an' full price an' respectable."

"Hush! hush! Now, do hush, Roxie! Jus' you lets 'em by 'mselves a bit. Tell you deys more to one'nother dan you thinks for. *You trust me.* I known him all his life. Known him when he come aboard. Known him ebber sense he was a little boy. Known him before de war. Come, now! I done raised with him!"

Roxana opened her eyes. Mel saw he had made an impression. He nodded his head rap-

idly, and was just about to close the conversation with a kiss when Harrie Tontine, who, unperceived, had been stealing raisins in the pantry, dropped a spoon. Roxana, startled by the noise, hurried down into the ladies' cabin, while Mel turned to defend the steward's stores, and to reprimand the marauder, who, with a shriek of laughter, flew past him, slamming the pantry door and rushing down into her mother's state-room, where she breathlessly reported that Mr. Dobson had got hold of Mrs. Wolcott's telegram and would not give it up, adding that one of the stewards had been making love to the stewardess, and had said he'd known Dobson when he came on board in spite of his false name, had known him ever since he was a boy, and had been brought up with him.

The latter part of this information made little impression on Mrs. Tontine at the time, but subsequently, when, to use her own expression, she "came to think it over and put two and two together," she remembered it.

When Adela reached the guards, the tender was a cable's length from the Crimea, which was already beginning to move seaward. Adela darted up to the first officer.

"Mr. Adkins, did no telegrams come off from Queenstown? There should have been one for me."

"I cannot say, Mrs. Wolcott. Mr. Wood, where's the steward that had charge of the man from the telegraph office?"

"What's that, Mr. Adkins?" asked the captain, from the bridge. The captain always had an eye and ear for any want or wish of Peter Engels's daughter.

"Mrs. Wolcott, sir, expected a telegram at Queenstown."

"A telegram about my little boy, Captain," cried Adela.

The captain raised his speaking trumpet: "Tender ahoy! Was there any telegram for Mrs. Wolcott?"

"Ay, ay!" came the reply.

"What did you do with it?"

"Gentleman signed for it, — her ——" The words that followed sounded like "her husband."

"The fool has made some blunder," said the captain. "He has given it to the wrong man. Send for the steward who had him in charge. It is on board, of course. We'll have it for you in a moment, Mrs. Wolcott. Here, you Quin, who's got the telegram for this lady?"

"Duuno, sah! Stewardess was looking for her."

"Roxana, have you?" said Mrs. Wolcott, as at that moment she perceived Roxana in the companion-way.

Roxana shook her head, and darted a look of furious reproach at Mel, who dodged out of sight as rapidly as possible.

Adela turned deadly pale.

"Mr. Dobson — he has got it, Mrs. Wolcott," whispered Roxana.

"Did n't some one say Dobson had gone ashore?" said a bystander.

Adela turned sick with apprehension. She understood it now. Her husband had fooled her. He had got possession of her child. He had intercepted the telegram, and had landed at Queenstown to return to Liverpool.

Adela was not Griselda. She was not capable of patiently sacrificing her child for any husband.

"No matter, Captain Moore," she said, with an instinct that at least she must preserve her dignity. "Be so good as to say no more about my telegram."

But she trembled till she could hardly stand.

"You are ill, Mrs. Wolcott?"

"I am not very well. The motion is too much for me. I will go into the cabin."

Pausing again, before she turned to go down the companion, she said piteously, "You could not put me ashore, Captain, in a little boat?"

"No, my dear madam," he replied, "that would be quite out of my power. It's a wild coast. The sea and wind are rising. We are

going to have a blow. Has anything gone wrong with you, Mrs. Wolcott? The telegram must be on board. The third officer shall make it his business to look it up. I do not think anything can be the matter with the little boy."

"No, Captain; say no more about my message. I know who has it. The man landed at Queens-town. I—I shall be all right when I get down to my state-room."

"It is getting too rough even for so good a sailor as you are, Mrs. Wolcott," the captain said, as he helped her with a sailor's tenderness down the companion-way. He put her under Roxana's care, and returning upon deck found his passengers and officers in great excitement. A little steam-tug had put off from the pier at Queens-town as soon as the tender had got back, and, notwithstanding the disparity of size, was impudently giving chase to the proud and beautiful Crimea.

CHAPTER XII.

AT LAST.

Somewhere, somehow, when we two meet again,
How much must we forget, how much remember!
LADY CHARLOTTE ELLIOT.

WHEN Captain Moore caught sight of the tug in chase, he was exceedingly annoyed.

"We have lost time already," he said. "I am not going to bring to for any one. They can't force me to bring to if I get three miles out to sea, even if they have a warrant and an officer for any man on board."

"What is it, Captain?" cried a dozen passengers.

"I suppose they want to overhaul us and find some thief or other. I sha'n't let them, however. They can telegraph to the police in New York, and keep a lookout for him at the other end of the ferry. We might lose several hours, and I want to be well off the land while we have daylight. If she comes near enough to speak, we may hear what she has to say."

The little tug travelled bravely. She was

crowding on steam: The passengers all watched her from the deck of the *Crimea*. Glasses were levelled at her. Colonel Wolcott, who had gone below to right his state-room after the departure of his chum at Queenstown, signed to Mel, who brought him a very powerful glass out of the captain's cabin. He made out the tug's errand in a moment, for he saw Adela's travelling companion, the London lawyer, upon the bridge.

Mr. Smith, as he at once suspected, had reached Queenstown just in time to see his signature in the book of the telegraph man, and to discover that he instead of his wife had received the message. He was now doing the best he could for Mrs. Wolcott, by coming off to put her on her guard, or, if she thought it best, to take her out of the *Crimea*.

For a few moments Colonel Wolcott hesitated what to do. Captain and officers were glancing at him suspiciously. He was the *Jonah* whose misdeeds might obstruct the ship's voyage. All knew by this time that he was not "Dobson."

Adela, below, had been roused by Mrs. Tontine, who came into the state-room to inquire if she had got her telegram yet; adding, "Oh! I supposed from what he said that, after all the fuss, he would have handed it to you."

She sharply watched the effect of this speech on Adela, but it provoked no reply, though she

could see that it had struck home, by a flush on the cheeks of the victim.

That Mrs. Wolcott had not asked who might be meant by "he" confirmed Mrs. Tontine in the suspicion she had begun to entertain that "Dobson" might be Colonel Wolcott.

Mrs. Tontine left Adela watching from her port-hole the little tug dancing in the long white wake of the big steamer, and, going upon deck, joined the other passengers. The horrid Tontine child, to whom Dobson was an object of curiosity, got close to him, and stared up into his face steadily.

"By Heaven!" he thought, "she glares at me till she makes me feel as if I had committed a burglary. I must put some kind of stop to this suspicion."

He walked up to the captain.

"Captain Moore," he said, "can you spare me your attention?"

"Of course, sir—for a few moments—yes, sir," said the captain. "Mr. Adkins, sir, set the main course, and show her a clean pair of heels. Now, if you please, Mr.—Dobson."

And he led the way into the small closet, where as we have already said, he kept his papers and worked up his observations. There was a cushioned locker in this den and some shelves with books and bottles.

"Now, sir!" he said sternly.

"Captain, I suspect that the errand of that boat has something to do with me," said Colonel Wolcott, feeling his situation an extremely awkward one.

"I am not surprised to hear it, sir. We know that you are travelling under a false name," said the captain stiffly.

"My real name is Wolcott,—Colonel Lancelot Wolcott. You have my wife on board. She and my son made the last trip with you. You may have heard of me as an Eastern traveller."

"You don't tell me you are Colonel Wolcott? Bless me, Colonel—why, I have got your book!" fumbling for it under the cushions of the locker. "But now I think of it—" he added, a new idea occurring to him, he resumed his caution, reflecting he might yet be the victim of an imposition; and lifting the lid of the locker, pulled out some papers.

"*There* is your picture, sir," he said sternly. "That gentleman, Colonel Wolcott,—you see his name plainly printed underneath,—has hardly a hair on his skull."

"Here is my passport, Captain," said the colonel, "which I have been travelling with ever since I left Constantinople. You can judge if I correspond with my official description. That woodcut in the 'Illustration' is a mistake. It

is the portrait of an old friend of mine in the Khedive's army. If you want further proof, you have a lad here, born in Georgia on my own plantation, who has recognized me, and here is a telegram addressed to my wife, which tells her that I am on board."

"Ah! poor lady — her telegram," said the captain, holding out his hand for it. "Nothing about her boy. Well, Colonel Wolcott, that makes it all right, of course. I am happy to know you. So that boat yonder has nothing to do in any way with you."

"Captain Moore," said Wolcott gravely, "are you a married man?"

"Yes, indeed. I have Mrs. Moore and five children to provide for."

"Then I think I may appeal to you. I had not seen Mrs. Wolcott for nine years when I met her in a railway carriage coming down to Liverpool. She did not know me. Her lawyer, Mr. Smith, who is standing yonder on the bridge of that tug, was travelling with her. He has found me out since we left Liverpool, and has chartered that boat to follow and take her off this steamer. Captain—I am half ashamed to tell you—but my lawyer in New York, six weeks ago, got instructions from me to institute proceedings for a divorce in the courts of Indiana—"

"Dear me! dear me! Bless us, Colonel! A

divorce?" exclaimed the captain. "Let me ask you, as an old man, Are you sure you are not acting under some wrong impression? Mrs. Wolcott made the last voyage with me. I was very much struck by her as a most estimable lady, not at all the sort of lady a husband would be anxious to divorce,—a most admirable lady. I never had a finer on any ship I ever had command of; and, indeed, I am a fair judge, Colonel Wolcott. I have ladies of all kinds on board, you see."

"Captain, you make me more ashamed of myself than I was before. Not one word can be breathed against Mrs. Wolcott. The fault is all my own. But in our Western States almost any incompatibility of disposition or of temperament is held to justify the dissolution of a marriage. In short, Captain, keep my secret till we land in America. She is short-sighted. I am travelling on another man's ticket and under his name, and I am not quite sure whether she has recognized me or not. Hinder that fellow in the boat from coming alongside, give me a fair field and no favor for this trip, and I'll engage to win her back before we enter New York harbor."

"Please God, you may, Colonel!" said the captain piously. "What God has joined together it is not right for lawyers and legislatures to put asunder. We all, I suppose, have to put up with

something from our wives ; but the devil invented this divorce business. Slipping the cable the moment that the ship begins to ride uneasy is not what I call good seamanship. I wish it may come right for you, with all my heart. Mrs. Wolcott, I should say, is a lady among ten thousand, worth winning and worth keeping."

"Then, Captain, you will remember that my name is Dobson for the next two weeks ; and you will keep the secret I have told you ?"

The captain nodded his head.

"And you will give me any facilities you can for seeing my wife ?"

"I will indeed, sir."

"I am glad I have spoken to you."

"It was much the best thing to do. We now understand each other. Take an old man's advice, Colonel,—one who has had thirty years' experience in matrimony. Give a wide berth to lawyers and divorces. A man ought to be able to settle his own affairs with any woman. If he gets caught in a matrimonial squall, let him make all snug and take in sail as quick as possible. That's what I should tell him if he consulted me. Kiss your wife and make it up with her before nightfall. 'Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.' That's Bible doctrine, sir. You have her at an advantage, don't you see ? Most women will be ready to take a husband's kiss if

he sets about it the right way. You may trust an old married man's experience for that, — and I ought to know the ladies, Colonel."

When they reappeared on deck, after this conference, they found that by extraordinary exertions the tug had gained on the *Crimea* so far as to allow persons on her deck to be distinctly visible. The captain of the tug attempted a hail. The only words intelligible were, "*Crimea* ahoy! *Wolcott* — *Dobson*!"

"Ay, ay! We'll attend to it!" shouted the *Crimea's* captain. "Keep her away, Mr. Adkins! I sha'n't bring to, whatever she wants. Keep her away!"

By this time the main course, which the men had been getting ready on the deck, was in its place, and the *Crimea* began to feel the breeze as she drew off the land. She gave a plunge and shook herself, flashing the copper on her big side out of the brine, and slightly altering her course as she dropped a parting courtesy to the gallant little vessel behind her. The tug, seeing that the chase was now past hope, dropped astern and prepared to steam back more slowly into *Queens-town*.

Colonel *Wolcott* stood on the saloon-deck, watching her. The sea was rising rapidly, the motion of the ship increasing; all passengers had disappeared from deck. The ship was work-

ing round Cork Head. There was a moan and flutter in the shrouds aloft, a sudden burst of rain, and the plunge of heavy seas, as the Crimea rounded into the steady sweep of a gale outside. It was not weather for a landsman to be on deck, and Colonel Wolcott was just going below "when he was ware" of a head, wrapped in a soft white cloud of knitted wool, rising unsteadily above the break of the deck. A fair hand clasped the brazen stanchion of the stairway, and a figure rose before him, blown by the rising gale, wet with the furious rain, and in peril every moment from the vessel's motion.

"Good God, Adela!" he cried. "Is it possible? This is no place for you!"

"Where *is* my place? Is it here? Is it anywhere?" she said vehemently, pushing his arm aside by a gesture rather than movement, as he rushed to help her. "You would not have me here, perhaps. You have no room for me in your world, but I must speak. I must live, you know, just so long as God may please. If my death could leave you free I would gladly die, but it cannot be until God wills it so. We must make the best of things. I wish I could have died before I lost my trust in you!"

The wind made her stagger as she spoke. The rain blew in swirls about her face and loosened her hair. Her husband, disconcerted by

her rejection of his aid, offered it no longer. She could not stand, and sat down on the upper brass-bound step of the six that led to the quarter-deck, clasping one of the stanchions.

"I must see you," she said, "and I cannot in the saloon or on the guards. I must understand, must speak. I cannot bear this suspense. I am Lancey's mother. Tell me, who was it stood beside the man that hailed us from the little steamer, — the old man with white hair? I could not see who it was, but I guessed — I guessed."

"I knew the man at once," said Colonel Wolcott. "I recognized him immediately."

"Then it *was* Mr. Smith, my London lawyer, — Mr. Smith, who travelled with us to Liverpool. He came to bring me news of Lance! I thought I heard them shout my name and the name that you go by on this ship. What right had you to take my telegram? What has happened to my boy?"

"Forgive me, Adela. I had no right to take your telegram. I own it. I have lost a husband's rights in everything concerning you. It was wrong, I acknowledge. But the telegram was put into my hands and I saw its contents. It said nothing about Lance. I feared that it might make you land at Queenstown, which would take away from me all chance to plead my cause. I hoped when we had made this voyage — but no matter.

I see you are as prejudiced against me as ever. The telegram was not what you suppose. It was to put you on your guard, — I will send it you by Mel, — to warn you that I was on board."

"Why did you say anything about it to Mrs. Tontine?"

"Mrs. Tontine! Nonsense. Can't you forget that, Adela? I had my folly once; but what have I to do now with Mrs. Tontine?"

"But Lance?" she cried. "I left him half ill, excited, unhappy! I left him among strangers, for the first time in his life, that I might make this voyage. I thought — I hoped — never before since he was born have I been parted from him. Oh, give me my boy back again! Have you stolen him? Lancelot, I will try not to think you treacherous, though it was very cruel. I trusted you and I betrayed my child!"

"Don't, Adela, oh, don't! I cannot bear it," he said, turning his head away from her. "What makes you call me treacherous? What do you mean by betrayal? I know nothing. I have done nothing. Treacherous! If there be any treachery, is it not yours? You have hidden my boy from his father. You have put him out of my reach. I only know what you have told me."

"You took my telegram. I wanted it so much! If it was not to tell me that you have him, then Lance must be ill. Ill, without me!

Ill, and I here ! That boat must have come out to take me back, to tell me that he is ill, and that he needs me. Is it so ? O Lancelot, do not keep back the ill news ! I have nothing left but Lance ; you have cast me away ! ”

“ Adela,” he reiterated, “ the telegram said nothing of the kind. It did not mention Lance in any way. He cannot be ill. There is no earthly reason to suppose so.”

“ How do you know ? I heard ‘ Wolcott ’ in the hail. What makes you sure ? Do not deceive me ! I see you know something. What was in that telegram ? Why do you turn away ? ”

“ Be comforted, Adela ! Do not sob so wildly ! The telegram was not about our boy. It was simply that man’s warning against myself. It came to tell you — ” he hesitated.

“ That we are divorced, before I can get home ? ” she cried, almost with a shriek.

“ No, simply to inform you that I am on board. It advised you to land, to go to a hotel, to take the next steamer. It said Smith would come to Queenstown. It was wrong to keep it, Adela, but I wanted my last chance too much to miss it when it came in my way. I did not mean to wrong you. I thought you would know nothing about it till I told you ; that no harm would be done if you never got Smith’s message. There was no mention of Lance, I give you my word.

The lawyer's only thought was to get you away from me."

"O Lancelot," she began to plead, "you will not take him from me? You will not enforce your claim?"

"Be comforted," he cried eagerly, "I will not take him. I make that promise solemnly, without conditions."

She started to her feet, forgetful of the plunging of the vessel.

As she rose, some object slipped down the saloon-deck like a boy upon a slide. The ship gave a tremendous plunge; the moving object struck Adela, knocked her off her feet, and bounded down the break on to the deck below them. Her husband caught her as she fell.

The missile was Harrie Tontine, who had shot down upon them from the after part of the saloon-deck on which they were standing, having lost her footing in the sudden lurch.

The next moment the *Crimea* shipped a heavy sea. Colonel Wolcott, with his burden, lost his footing, and felt himself carried to leeward on the back of a green swell. For a few seconds he imagined that he and Adela were overboard. Then, as the ship rolled back, they were dashed against some brass-work, and he recovered himself as the water rushed down upon the guards and plunged over into the sea out of the scuppers.

Adela had given one wild shriek as Harrie, followed by the rushing wave, bore down upon her. She clung tight to her husband's neck with full consciousness of the situation, for a moment, and then she fainted.

But Harrie had the elasticity of a cork, and was quite uninjured by her slide.

"Where have you come from, Miss Harrie?" cried the third officer, who caught her. "Did n't I tell you not to go up on the hurricane deck in this gale? No passengers ever go up there when the wind blows."

"Yes, but they do though," cried Harrie. "Mr. Dobson and Mrs. Wolcott are quarrelling up there now. I saw him trying to put his arm round Mrs. Wolcott's waist and she would not let him. That's what I went up to look at. I knocked her down, I think, and then he got hold of her. Look, Mr. Adkins! There he comes down now! He is carrying her in his arms!"

The officers hurried forward, but Colonel Wolcott would not give up his burden to them. He carried her, dripping and unconscious, down to the ladies' cabin, where, the door of her state-room being open, he entered, and laid her on the bed, crying, "Where is the doctor?"

In a moment the stewardess and the doctor of the ship hurried in, followed by several ladies.

"Come and change your things, sir," said Mr.

Adkins, tapping the colonel on the shoulder as he stood gazing stupidly at his unconscious wife. "You are making all the cabin dripping wet. Don't you see?"

"Is she hurt, doctor? Did she strike against the brass?" he asked, paying no attention to Mr. Adkins.

"No, sir," said the surgeon, with some contempt, — for Harrie was pouring out her version of the event to a circle of listeners in the ladies' cabin, — "nor do we want you here. Mrs. Wolcott has to be undressed. Go down and change your own clothes. Steward," to Mel, "get him a stiff glass of hot brandy and water."

"You are sure she is not injured in any way?"

"Clear the state-room, if you please!" was all he could get out of the doctor.

CHAPTER XIII.

JEALOUSY.

And through the tossings of one turbulent night
Let me descry the harbor of my home.

H. TAYLOR, *Edwin the Fair*.

"LANCELOT! Lancelot!" were the first words that Adela uttered as she came to herself.

"That's her little boy she's asking for; his name is Lancelot," interpreted the stewardess to the ladies. "She is thinking about him."

The first words that Adela heard distinctly were from the doctor.

"What do you want, steward?"

"Please, sah, Mas' Dobson he want to know how's Mrs. Wolcott — Miss Adela? I was to bring him word soon's she could speak."

"Tell him to mind his own business. Mrs. Wolcott won't be any the better for anything that he can do," grumbled the doctor.

Adela struggled to get up. Her impulse was to be upon her feet, and to go again on deck,

where she might meet her husband, but she fell back feebly upon her pillows.

"Lie quiet, Mrs. Wolcott," said the doctor. "Don't let her have any excitement, but keep her in bed," he said to the other ladies. "Now then, I'll go and see Miss Harrie, Mrs. Tontine."


"Here I am, doctor," cried the irrepressible Harrie. "I put on dry clothes, and had a glass of something hot the steward brought me. Stewardess, go and pick up my things! they are all in a wet puddle on the floor of my state-room."

"Harrie had no business to be on deck, watching people," said Mrs. Tontine severely. "Her governess, Miss Wylie, has been sick in her berth, and Harrie takes advantage. She sees everything she is n't meant to see."

"Doctor," said Mrs. Hobbes, "I'll sit with Mrs. Wolcott. What do you think it is,—the fall, or sea-sickness, or some shock she had from somebody on deck, or grieving for her little boy?"

"We shall tell better to-morrow," said the doctor. "Meantime keep her quiet, and don't let her hold any communication with any one who might renew the excitement."

"You mean not with Mr. Dobson? No, doctor, Mrs. Hobbes and I, and my governess, Miss Wylie (if she's well enough) will see that she is not disturbed," said Mrs. Tontine.



For some time after Adela recovered consciousness she lay with closed eyes, unwilling to open them upon the faces about her, and recalling the late scenes upon the deck with many an inward shudder.

After a while she looked up and found that she was alone with Mrs. Hobbes ; but the din of the gale was deafening, — the creaking of the ship, the swash of the bilge-water, the rattle of the rudder-chains, and the roaring of the wind as it howled among the rigging.

Beside her in a rocking-chair sat Mrs. Hobbes, holding fast to one of the posts of the bed ; for the " Bridal State-room " boasted exemption from the usual wooden coffins in which ordinary sea-going passengers sleep. The poor lady was beginning to feel the motion of the ship, though thus far she had borne up bravely, and would have retired to her berth had she not felt under a sort of responsibility to Mrs. Tontine, who had assumed the place of head-nurse to Mrs. Wolcott, and had strictly ordered her coadjutrix not to suffer any messages to pass between Mr. Dobson and the patient, the doctor having expressly prohibited them.

In vain Mel sought Roxana, and endeavored to make her a go-between.

" I won't have nothing to do with things like them," she said. " My ladies is respectable. I

know that Mrs. Wolcott don't want nothing of that kind, when she gets well enough to hear what is being said of him in the cabin. I don't want no foxes nor no 'possums in sheep's clothing, sneaking round *my* ladies. A young girl and her beau, now, I'd take a message for, but not this kind, Mr. Mel."

"Well, but jes' tell me how she is, Miss Young. The poor feller does so want to know about her."

"Tell him she's none the better for seein' him, an' that's what the doctor said himself," said Roxana. "I think he's a real impudent feller, — that Dobson, — no matter if you was brought up upon de same plantation. 'Pears like it must have been some ornary one-horse farm. 'Specs he was some low-down white trash; he looks like it, anyhow."

"How do you find yourself, my dear?" said Mrs. Hobbes, as Adela, who had heard a portion of all this, lay endeavoring to devise some pretext for calling Mel into her state-room. Then, after giving her some spoonfuls of beef-tea, she resumed, "My dear, I am an old woman and a grandmother. You will not think it rude if I say that in your situation you must give up a good many things, — things that of themselves may be perfectly proper and reasonable."

She paused, and Adela said sadly, —

"I know that, Mrs. Hobbes. I have always

tried to walk by that rule. I know it is the only safe one for a woman living apart from her husband."

"Yes, dear. This young man Dobson, now, for instance. I dare say he is not a forger or a Fenian or a defaulter, as some people say; still, it is not quite the thing for you to be seen with him so frequently, or to go with him alone on deck in such a gale, and take him in to prayers, you know."

"Dear Mrs. Hobbes, so far as taking any one to church goes, I don't know why people should comment on my having done so. I met him on the journey to Liverpool. I can't explain the case to you or any one. I supposed people knew me and would trust me. People always have been kind to me. Nothing disagreeable ever has been said of me before."

"There's something in that, of course there is," said Mrs. Hobbes. "But, you see, people will gossip on a sea-voyage. The ship is like a world,—they must have daily news to keep life going; and you have a friend on board who is not very friendly. Mrs. Tontine would be glad of anything that put you in the wrong, or, at least, so it seems to me."

"Ah! Mrs. Tontine," said Adela, with a sigh.

"Yes, I know. You were rivals, and she would be glad to injure you and get up stories to your

discredit if she could. You have no idea how such things spread. And indeed, my dear, every one is talking about this Mr. Dobson. The tug came out of Queenstown, with an officer on board to take him off the ship, they say. I know that you mean no harm and do no harm, — of course I do ; but you should be careful. So many people's eyes are fixed on him and you since that horrid little Harrie started all this talk."

Adela sighed, and made no reply. She lay quiet, and began to pray. How good it is that, when perfectly powerless to help ourselves, we can call upon the Fatherhood of God and be sure that He hears !

Somehow, since that moment in her husband's arms she felt a sanguine hope that she should win him yet. The blessedness of such success seemed to rise upon her, like a star of love and hope above a dark horizon. She would no longer despair. The reproaches she had addressed to him on the deck now seemed unjust and fretful. She had shown want of trust in God and faith in him. Was it jealousy that had made her, even for a moment, think that the man she loved would be happier on a lower level with an inferior woman ? How could she so have disparaged him, even in thought, as to suppose that he could be content with a Mrs. Tontine ?

Softly she repeated the Lord's Prayer over to

herself, as was her custom when perplexed or beset by any trial. It was so comfortable to trust God in distress, so comfortable to have the right to lean on Him! Then she remembered Cromwell's favorite psalm, and in its words implored her Heavenly Father "to heal the breach, to be the Restorer of paths safe to walk in."

There was also satisfaction as she thought of the fame her husband had won. The man in whose favor the reading world had pronounced its verdict could no longer be crushed by her connections or by the disadvantage of her money. He seemed to her to have shaken himself free from much that in past years had marred their married happiness.

Her soul floated into a rainbow-tinted dream of happy thoughts, from which she was roused by Harrie, shouting from the doorway of the state-room, —

"Mrs. Hobbes, mamma sends word that she hopes you are not angry with her for leaving you so long with Mrs. Wolcott. She will be down to take her turn directly. But she is up in the saloon, having a good time with the captain and Sir George and Mr. Dobson. She said I was to tell you. Mr. Dobson is drinking tea at the first table."

Adela, on hearing this, started up in her bed, eager to rise, but this Mrs. Hobbes prevented.

She had not been satisfied with the effect produced by her hints about Mr. Dobson, and this message gave her an opportunity to try advice once more.

"You see, my dear," she said, "Mr. Dobson seems very ready to take up with any lady who gives him an opportunity. Leave him to Mrs. Tontine. I saw her ogling him when I was last upstairs."

"It 's mighty queer he should be eating at the captain's table anyhow," remarked Roxana, who just then came into the state-room. "I thought Captain Moore knew enough to keep such folks in their places. But I don't believe it anyway. First place, there is a stiff gale an' a heavy sea. The captain does not often quit the deck such nights, an' he 's mighty particular who he lets sit down at his own table. He don't allow nobody to do that 'cept those he likes, an' whom he knows has everything to recommend them. I don't think as he does know that gentleman,—or not favorably. Leastways I heard him say, no longer ago than after luncheon, that he reckoned the police was after him, an' came out in that tug to get him out of the Crimea."

Adela heard this, and the pretty flowers of her hope folded their leaves. If he elected to be with Mrs. Tontine in her absence, it corroborated her worst fears.

Presently a noise was heard upon the brass-bound stairs of the companion, then a noisy laugh and a loud voice, betokening that Mrs. Tontine was coming down from the saloon, supported by gentlemen. Adela sat up in bed. The door of her state-room had been left partly open by Mrs. Hobbes, and she saw Cora stagger into the ladies' cabin, upheld by Captain Moore upon one side and on the other by Mr. Dobson.

"You may go now," said the widow, relinquishing the latter's arm. "You have no business in this cabin. It is only free to married gentlemen who have their wives on board, you know."

"Not until I ask —" he said, moving towards Adela's door. Their eyes met, but Mrs. Hobbes, by a movement of her foot, promptly slammed it in his face.

It was a little comfort to Adela to remember that movement as she tossed restlessly all night upon her bed. Her husband returned to the saloon, discomfited, but somewhat consoled by the brief glance he had obtained of her.

"Well, Mr. Dobson," said Sir George, "you seem to have achieved a rapid conquest of the widow. They say that as black walls absorb light, so widows' weeds absorb the most attention."

"I knew Mrs. Tontine before she was a widow — before she was even Mrs. Tontine," said Dobson, willing to give more of his confidence to an

utter stranger than he would have done to an American. "I thought her attractive then,—but how changed she is. Is the change only in her, I wonder, or can it be that I have changed?"

"It may be that marriage altered her," said Sir George, "or perhaps it was a case, on your part, when

"The first experience of unripe years
Was nature's error on the way to truth."

They say that every woman improves or deteriorates according as she marries."

"What a motive for the careless to choose carefully!" said Lancelot thoughtfully. "But she was not noisy then — or — or coarse. However, perhaps when I knew her first I looked at her with the sun shining in my eyes!"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE WRECK.

No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

SHELLEY, *Adonais*.

THE next day broke, thick, lowering, and gray, with a short, heavy swell. The atmosphere seemed to press down upon the ship. It was not haze, it was not fog, but a sort of dead weight of atmospheric pressure. A heavy, leaden sky loomed over a dull, gloomy sea. The Crimea labored terribly, rising with apparent effort on the back of every swell. The passengers were nearly all kept prisoners in their berths, though some few were in the saloon, from the windows of which they looked out on the gray-green heave which it sickened them to study. It was one of those uncomfortable days on shipboard when sailors have everything their own way, and when all a landsman can do is to hold on, physically and metaphorically, till things right themselves and restore the passenger element to supremacy.

There was not much wind as yet, though it was evident that a gale was coming up from the Bay of Biscay. Now and then, without warning, all things loose about the decks, animate or inanimate, were flung to leeward, and for a moment the ship floundered helplessly till she rose upon another swell.

A sleepless night had more and more unsettled Colonel Wolcott's plans and feelings.

"Doubts tossed him to and fro,
Love keeping Hope, Hope, Love alive."

At one moment his courage sank as he recalled the look of wild reproach his wife had cast at him; at another, he thrilled with the remembrance of the instant during which he had held her in his arms.

On his reappearance among the officers of the ship and his fellow-passengers, he perceived afresh that he was an object of general avoidance and suspicion. At first it amused, then it annoyed him. In his present mood, isolation was hateful. He was yearning for sympathy.

"I have no longer any reason to conceal myself from Adela. The die is cast, so far as she is concerned," he said. "And yet how can I admit the vulgar crowd on board into my confidence, how suffer it to watch the progress of a drama which is life and death to me? No! So long as the voyage lasts, I must retain this name of

Dobson. But as for you, old boy, you may recognize me now!" he suddenly exclaimed, stooping, with a new appreciation of sympathy, to the dog, who for four days had never ceased, whenever his master appeared on deck, to track his steps, and sniff about his feet with looks of mute inquiry. The animal had been reasoning within himself, as we all know a good dog will, not able to set his confused perceptions right because no caress from the hand that once fondled him had responded to his demonstrations of delight, turning his suspicions into certainty.

But now Colonel Wolcott whistled as he took the dog's head in his two hands. The creature recognized the note; he recognized the voice he had been tutored to obey when, six years before, his master had lain wounded and in hiding in a cabin on his own plantation. With a low whine of yearning long suppressed, and then a sudden, quick bark of rapture and surprise, the creature knew him, sprang on him, licked his face, fawned upon his hands and breast, and nestled its head into his bosom. The humble affection of a dumb animal often melts the brave man's heart, — perhaps because, like manly tenderness for little children, it makes a safety-valve for strong emotion. No man is ashamed of being moved by the affection of a beast or a child. Colonel Wolcott fairly broke down before the dog's delight. His

eyes grew moist, his heart was full. It was Ulysses at his threshold :— would he win back his Penelope ?

It was early in the morning, and, as we have said, the swell was too great to tempt passengers on deck from safer parts of the vessel. He and the dog had the guards to themselves, and could give free vent to emotion. The man caressed and fondled the dog ; the dog leaped round him. It was like one of those moments of abandon into which boys fling themselves with animals, in which it is hard to say if the creature is almost human or the boy almost dog.

Jeb was a black-and-tan setter of the Gordon breed, with eyes as tender, beseeching, and wistful as a woman's ; and soft fringes on his shapely legs.

As Colonel Wolcott played with this old comrade the flood-gates of his heart were opened, and forth rushed a pent-up tide of long-repressed affection. To no one on board, save Adela, could he have spoken about his hopes, but to Jeb he gave his confidence freely. " God help me, Jeb ! God help me ! I will win her back. I am a lost man if I fail ; and if ever I have wife and child and house and home and happiness again, I 'll have you and Mel too, I promise, Jeb."

Later in the day Mel put the following note into his master's hand :—

" Do not think me ungrateful or ungracious,

though I may not be able to do all that you expect of me. I appreciate the generosity of your promise, made without conditions. I have seen your feeling for our boy. The sight of it and the attraction that he found in you made me perceive that a child needs both his parents, that a boy is not like those little animals who only need a mother. I send you his address, that you may write to him or see him. You will not take him from me, nor will I any longer hide him from you. You gave me to understand that news of his birth never reached you. Letters were written at the time and afterwards, but I suppose they did not get through the lines. I wish I understood more fully what you would have of me. If it be what I fear, it is my duty to oppose you ; but not for selfish or unworthy ends. I respect my marriage vow, and must act as I think right for him and myself and you."

Colonel Wolcott read this letter over and over. It was systematically cold, as if the writer had repressed herself with every word, but in it there was evident a wish to do him justice, a sympathy for him as the father of Lance, and openings that might lead to reconciliation. He read and pondered it over and over. He sought her on the decks, which were wet and lonely; looked into the ladies' cabin, where he had no claim to penetrate; watched for her among the groups

who, after luncheon, were endeavoring to amuse themselves in the saloon in spite of the heavings and plungings of the vessel : but in vain ; she did not appear.

He questioned the doctor, who answered him curtly that Mrs. Wolcott was ill and unable to leave her cabin.

Pencil and paper was his only resource. It might be rash to write to her, to deprive himself, at the supreme moment of his life, of the persuasiveness of look, tone, touch,—of the personal memories that evermore, whatever may chance in a married woman's life, connect her with her husband ; but he burned with impatience to "put his fortunes to the touch," and would delay no longer.

"Adela, my dearest wife," he wrote, "I have been blind and ignorant. Give me the opportunity to plead my cause. Make little Lance a link between us. Precious as he is to you, I shall not rest satisfied until you love his father just a little more. I love you, Adela, and will do my best to make you love me in return, unless your heart is wholly set against me. If I may plead with you, come out and join me in the captain's cabin, near the round house. I shall remain there till I see you.

"Devotedly, your husband,

"L. S. W."

This note he gave to Mel, and waited, with reactionary misgivings, for the answer.

The steward soon came back.

"Miss Adela in her berth," he said.

"Did you give it to her, Mel?"

"Yes, Mas' Lancelot. That is, I stood by when de stewardess, she gib it her. Mrs. Tontine an' dat ar limb, Miss Harrie, was in her state-room; an' Miss Harrie ask Miss Adela if it was a love-letter, an' laugh, an' say she knew it was from you."

"Ask the stewardess to let you know as soon as she is getting up, Mel."

"Thinks maybe she's too sick to get up, Mas' Lancelot, an' as for deck, why, deck ain't no fit place jus' now for ladies. 'Specs it's coming on to blow great guns."

Hour after hour passed. Colonel Wolcott took his place in the saloon at dinner. Few passengers, and those all men, were present. The captain was not there. Adela did not appear.

He asked the captain, after dinner, if he had heard from her, and whether, if she came on deck, he might use the little cabin. He was comforted, on the whole, when the captain told him that he was very sure she would not come on deck that day, as peremptory orders had been sent down to keep all the ladies under hatches.

"It is as much as we can do to work the ship

without having them to take care of," said the captain. "Ladies are best out of the way when it comes on to blow."

Still restless, Colonel Wolcott, about dusk, again went on deck. The night was lowering, though a small crescent moon at intervals broke with a sort of watery light through rifts in the flying scud, and lighted up the glimmering spray along the billow's edge.

"A roughish night," said one of the officers, shaking the water from his cap. They were more civil to Mr. Dobson since it was known that the captain had admitted him to his own table.

The steamer was laboring in the long swell. She was freighted with railroad iron, always a most unmanageable cargo. It demoralizes the compass and is difficult to stow,—indeed, it is almost impossible to load it so as to trim a vessel; besides which, should it by any accident break loose, it soon bumps a hole in the ship's bottom. The officers were all preparing for a stormy night. Every now and then the straining ship went down into a valley of black water, then rose upon the surging crest of the succeeding wave, the mighty mass washing her onward as she buried her bows in the gray seas which foamed over her forecastle. Now forward and now aft, she felt the full force of the sea and wind,

and quivered as she rose to meet the blast from the protecting hollow of some giant billow.

An officer or two upon the hurricane deck clung to the brazen railing, which alone prevented them from being washed, feet foremost, into the boiling sea.

"No place this for you," said Captain Moore to his passenger. "It needs sea legs to keep the deck to-night. You had better go into the saloon or find shelter just within the doorway of the companion. We cannot have you get a ducking *every* evening."

As he spoke there was a sudden crash. A shiver ran through the whole framework of the vessel, the groans of the machinery ceased. The ship shook as though she would jerk all her masts out of her; the water poured over her bulwarks and swashed down the hatchways, carrying Colonel Wolcott off his feet. He brought up against something, he could not see what in the dark, and clutched it, while the great wave floated away from under him. As the water poured into the ship's waist, and ran off through the scuppers, he recovered himself, and sickened as he realized the escaped danger.

No one had noticed him, nor would have noticed him had he been washed away. All hands were busy, and an indescribable confusion prevailed both above and below; for in a few moments it

had become known to all on board that the great shaft of the engine had been broken, and that the *Crimea* was at that moment drifting helplessly, little better than a wreck.

Before she could be brought under control with sails she shipped sea after sea. Two of her masts had been split (she carried four), the jib-boom was blown away, the fore-royal mast was broken in two pieces, and with its yards went over the side, where, till the crew could cut it loose, it remained thumping against the hull of the vessel, knocking in one or two of the dead-lights, and smashing in its fall the skylight of the engine-room; it also crushed and ground two of the boats, which added greatly to the confusion and the alarm.

As soon as Colonel Wolcott could recover breath, he made his way into the ladies' cabin. There all was terror and confusion. Water was washing down the stairs, in spite of the efforts of the head steward and his assistants. Ladies were clinging to their husbands and fathers, and imploring them not to leave them. There was no raving, no running to and fro; but every time the vessel lurched a shriek arose, "and great fear was upon all faces."

Some women knelt at prayer in their state-rooms with the doors open, for an instinct to be together seemed common to all the passengers;

but the greater part were in the open cabin. A heavy chandelier had swung crashing against a mirror, and fragments of broken glass were scattered everywhere. Nearly all the lights were out, and the half darkness aided the confusion. Each time the ship rose on a wave, — rolling as if she never again could right herself, — and made a sharp downward plunge again, more water rushed down the hatchways, swashing first to one side, then the other, invading the state-rooms, drifting and floating boxes, books, tables, chairs, life-preservers, and everything movable about the cabins. It was no easy, rhythmic swell, such as all who have ever been to sea know and appreciate in a “stiff gale.” She was literally “trying.” The steersman could not keep her steady before the wind, and the pitching was terrible.

Through the confusion Colonel Wolcott made his way to his wife’s state-room. Adela, dressed, was standing within its threshold, steadying herself against the door-posts and the bulkhead. She turned and saw her husband. A rush of recollections overwhelmed them for a moment. Their glances were more eloquent than spoken words.

Bracing herself by back and feet against the doorway, Adela half held out her arms. Her husband put his round her. “God grant that we are still husband and wife, Adela!” he whispered.

"Amen!" she said. "Let us die husband and wife, — let us die together!"

"No, live together! We are wrecked, but not yet lost," exclaimed Lancelot.

"Amen!" responded Adela fervently.

Through all the horrors of their situation they had a momentary glimpse of Eden, like a gleam of peaceful glory from a Christmas tree, flashed before the eyes of some despairing outcast in the street as the curtain falls within before the lighted window-pane.

The curtain in this instance descended with a jerk, for they heard Harrie Tontine's disagreeable titter. Just then there was a cry down the companion of "Volunteers wanted for the pumps!"

Lancelot lifted Adela, and put her back upon the bed in her state-room.

When he struggled up on deck, the night seemed gloomier than ever. Water came washing round his knees, and the wind was blowing a hurricane. He felt his way, steadying himself by the ropes, the stays, and ratlines, till he arrived about midships. Six passengers and as many sailors were at the pumps, presided over by an officer, but the work was very laborious and exhausting. The sea broke over them so roughly that sometimes they all stood in water to their waists, and in that water floated objects, which, before they were washed overboard, hurtled against

everything they met, and bruised and injured more than one of the working party. Several of those who labored at the pumps had already received bad wounds. When a great sea was shipped, the pumps stopped perforce for a moment; then, as the wave receded, rose the strong voice of authority, urging them cheerily on with their task again.

About half an hour after this began, Mel made his way along the dangerous deck, saying as he came on, "Whar Mas' Lanoelot? Whar my young mas'r?"

In the ordinary intercourse of life, Mel, emancipated by the fate of war, would have scorned to call any man his master: now it seemed pleasant to revive every tie that involved a sense of relationship or protection.

He had brought a bottle of Cognac and a gutta-percha drinking-cup.

"Misse done sent them," he said.

"Tell her God bless her, Mel!" was the answer.

Unspeakably welcome as the refreshment was to all those laboring in the water, the glow of renewed courage that went through Colonel Wolcott's heart far exceeded the experience of the others. He had been cared for! There was some one to take thought for him! The wandering Arab, who had congratulated himself not a week since on his freedom from all ties, was now

in ecstasy at the reception of a mouthful of brandy from a wife's hand.

After another hour of tough work he was obliged to desist, from sheer exhaustion, and made his way back into the ladies' cabin. By that time the frightened passengers had grown more quiet. Many were sitting round Dr. Danvers at a table, where he alternately read passages of Scripture and uttered prayers. A young man, badly hurt on the deck, had been brought down among the women and laid upon a sofa.

Adela sat beside fanning him. She did not see her husband when he first opened the door, but he was met by a chorus of voices asking for news, and Mrs. Tontine seized upon him.

"Colonel, Colonel, save me, save me! Oh, for the sake of old times, take care of me!"

She flung herself upon his breast, she clung fast to him, while he stood powerless to unclasp her arms from his neck, yet fearing that Adela would misinterpret the situation.

"Pray calm yourself, Mrs. Tontine," he said. "Of course I shall do all I can for you. We are not lost yet. The ship is put about, and we are heading back to Queenstown."

"Yes, yes! But if the worst should come, save *me*! O Lancelot, save me! I am more to you than she can be. Think how you once loved me!"

Colonel Wolcott was utterly shocked. The woman was beside herself with abject terror, but he could not understand how, even at such a moment, personal fear could swallow up all womanly perception. He was trying to disengage her arms from his neck when Adela, steadying herself by the cabin bulkhead, came to his rescue.

"Mrs. Tontine," she said, with a quiver in her voice, "stay with me. My husband will take care of you."

"He's not your husband! You have been divorced. I had it in a letter from New York!" screamed Mrs. Tontine.

"We think not, we hope not," said Adela. "But, O Mrs. Tontine, standing as we all do in the presence of death, what is that to you?"

Mrs. Tontine sat on the floor half insensible. Several of those present carried her into her own state-room, and Adela closed the door.

"Poor woman!" she said, and sat down by the table, drawing her wet dress a little aside that her husband might, if he would, sit down beside her. It was no time for explanation or affection, but their hands sought each other under the table.

"Doctor," said Adela, leaning forward to the old clergyman (for in moments of great danger reserved women sometimes prove themselves more expansive and emotional than others), "this is my husband, Colonel Wolcott. Give us both your blessing."

Lancelot Wolcott laid his head upon the cabin-table, with a sob. His wife bent hers, with a calm smile of triumph and content, beside him.

The old pastor understood the situation.

"Children," he said, laying his withered hands on both their heads, "I commend you to Him 'whose hand can set right that which none other can.' One of the holiest men that ever lived taught that prayer to those whose troubles came from marriage."

CHAPTER XV.

THE RESCUE.

One hope within two wills, one will beneath
Two overshadowing minds, — one life, one death.

Epipsychidion, SHELLEY.

THE glimmer of another dawn shone at last upon the helpless passengers. The women on board, with the men belonging to them, were gathered in the condemned cell of the ship — the 'ladies' cabin. They were waiting for their death-warrant. All excitement (and fear is half excitement) seemed to have passed away. It was with them as it is with most of us in critical moments, — they were drifting insensibly over the bar that separates time from eternity, life from death, the known from that we have no power to know. Death seldom leaps upon us like a wild beast or a water-spout. He steals forward gently. The moments we have dreaded glide in upon us. We find ourselves in the midst of what we most feared, and are full of an astonished tranquillity. Before we are con-

scious that we have embarked on the dark river, its rapids are half-way past.

The sky of the new day was broken and troubled. The fury of the gale seemed somewhat less than it had been during the night, but the sea ran mountains high. The Crimea hung low at her stern, and at times rolled fearfully. A donkey-engine had at last been got to work, and, being connected with the pumps, had relieved the weary sailors and their volunteer assistants.

The ship had three boats left upon her weather side. The boats on the starboard quarter had been crushed like nut-shells when the fore-royal mast went by the board.

As the day dawned there was a general disposition among the passengers to escape from their place of confinement, and from time to time small parties ventured on deck, catching hold of every object that could steady their steps. The wet hair of the ladies blew about their necks and faces, entangling itself sometimes round the brass work or the ropes of the rigging, but no one seemed conscious of any disorder in dress. As a general thing, they were all quiet. To borrow a simile from Jean Paul, many were gazing through glass doors into eternity. They were waiting. Waiting for what? Each for a personal summons into the mysterious darkness which gathers at

either end of life, — a gloom no human eye, save that of One, has ever pierced ; through which no forerunner, save One, has ventured back ; a pathless waste, which believer or philosopher must tread one day for himself, the one alone in all the horror of great darkness, the other holding by his Saviour's hand.

In the cabin, Dr. Danvers, with many gathered round him, was still praying and exhorting. Colonel Wolcott and his wife had left their places, and together went up the companion way. The spectacle of the gloomy, troubled sky first broke on them as they came up, and then such a sea !

Before the ship, opened green hollows topped by tossing surges edged with sparkling foam ; behind, a raging waste of waters mountain high pursued, and dashed over stern and quarter, flinging to the sky showers of salt foam. One close-reefed sail only was to be seen on the ship, — Adela was too ignorant of seamanship to know what sailors called it ; it was the main topsail, — but though it presented very little surface to the gale, each blast that struck the ship seemed to seize it and the bent mast that supported it in its teeth and shake them furiously.

A dim and sulky sun was visible above the misty, shifting line of the horizon. The squall swept after them. The ship, flying before both

wind and sea, seemed less driven than pursued,—one moment in the trough, the next, rising on the crest of an immense, green, crinkled wave, which, as the wreck ascended it, seemed mysteriously to slip away from under her, while she rushed down the slope, trembling and quivering like a hunted thing, and dashing before her tons of glittering spray.

As Adela and her husband reached the deck, there was a sudden cry, and a rush to the bulwark on the lee quarter. A frightful sea, combined with a roll more tremendous than usual, had swept four sailors from the bowsprit, as the ship rose on the crest of a ninth swell and plunged down again, with one side half buried in the seething water. The lost men tried in vain to clutch at floating spars, ropes, chains,—they were washed off into the devouring waters. No man could save them. For a moment they were seen struggling in the waves, were heard shrieking for succor; but it was vain, their comrades were forced to leave them to contend alone with death. No boat could be lowered in such a sea. The great billows swept them after the ship, and must have borne them on and on till their powers of endurance were exhausted.

Adela gave a cry, and hid her face, clinging fast to her husband.

Half an hour after, as the ship was uplifted on

another mighty wave, there was a piercing shout of "Ship ahoy!"

"Where away?"

"On the port bow!"

Signals of distress were made, and the order was passed to get ready the boats. Several of the passengers hurried below to spread the good news, unconscious of the serious difficulties remaining; for, as we have said, the starboard boats were gone, and to round-to while running before a gale with a disabled ship, so as to make it possible to lower those on the weather side of the ship, without their being sucked under her rudder or her stern, seemed impossible.

The ship was on their weather bow,—a ship full-rigged,—standing across their course, which Captain Moore dared not materially alter. At first, to the naked eye, nothing of her but her masts, like three needles on the edge of the horizon, was visible; then rose the glistening glimmer of a wet sail over the swell; and, lastly, as she neared them the black line of her hull.

Those on the wreck watched her with an anxiety known only to men in whom the love of life has been reanimated by a hope of rescue. Friends clung to each other weeping. Some broke into an incessant and unnatural stream of talk; others thanked God for deliverance, vowing to serve Him thenceforward; some, with

renewed earnestness, resumed their prayers for succor.

Adela stood upon a coil of rope under the lee of the great mainmast, which sheltered her from the spray. She stood a little higher, by reason of her pedestal, than her husband, who, with arms uplifted, held her by the waist.

"Succor is coming, Adela," he said. "Thanks to your prayers, I think, my dearest! This ship is eastward bound. We shall get back to Lance in a few days, and live happy ever after this experience, like people in a fairy tale. How sweet it is to love you! How empty my heart has felt all these long years!"

As he said this, Mrs. Tontine, who had not appeared on deck before that morning, rushed up the companion, with a wild, white face and unbound hair. She glanced about her, awe-struck, for a moment. Then her eyes fell upon Colonel Wolcott standing by Adela, and, falling at his knees, she clasped them, crying, —

"Lancelot, Lancelot, save me, save me!"

"We shall all be saved, I trust," he said. "Mrs. Tontine, stand up, I beg of you," trying to make her rise.

"No, not until you promise. Promise, promise me to save me!"

"I promise that I'll do my best. Of course I'll do my best for you or any lady."

"Ma always thinks that she's of more account than anybody else," said Harrie, who had been on deck some time, and now made her way up to them. "Ma, you are looking like a perfect fright. You have not got half your hair on," added the *enfant terrible*.

"Hush, Harrie, hush," said Adela, who had stepped down from her coil of rope upon the deck, and stood clinging to her husband. "Your poor mamma is frightened; we are all frightened. See, that ship is coming to bring us help. Be quiet, Harrie, and thank God for sending her to save our lives."

The ship was now near enough to signal them. The captain made out her name with his glass. She was the Robert E. Lee of New York, homeward bound from Londonderry.

The gale was from the southwest. Ever since the Crimea had been put about she had been blown northeast of her true course to Queens-town.

Meantime Colonel Wolcott had succeeded in raising Mrs. Tontine to her feet. She stood clinging to his arm with her whole weight. His wife was on the other side of him. Fear and excitement made Mrs. Tontine voluble. The disgust he felt for her increased his pity and made it impossible rudely to shake her from him.

"O Lancelot Wolcott," she cried, "I *did* love

you! I never have loved any one but you! I ought not to have given you up for poor Tontine. Can you pardon a most unhappy girl, dazzled by false views of love and marriage? Can you forgive me the sacrifice I made of your whole life when I proved false to you?"

"Most heartily, Mrs. Tontine. I may even say I bless you. A week ago, perhaps, I might not have been so well able to feel the obligation,"—and his left arm pressed Adela closer to his side,—“I am too happy now to bear a grudge against any one.”

"What on earth do you mean? Why are you happy?" cried Cora, looking up into his eyes. "Are you sure that you forgive me with all your heart?"

"Perfectly sure, Mrs. Tontine."

"Ah! Lancelot, if it is really so, let me be saved by you, or let us die together!"

"We are not going to die, I hope, Mrs. Tontine. We are going on board the Robert E. Lee. You are getting very wet, and have no wrappings. Let Sir George Beavor take you below. Believe me, I will come and look for you when it is time for the boats," he said earnestly, anxious to get rid of her.

"Will you really come for me? Will you give me the first chance? Do you promise?"

"He'll save his wife first, you may depend on

that," said the captain, who, with Sir George and several others, had been attracted by so strange a scene at such a moment.

"She is n't his wife any more than I am, and she knows it!" cried Mrs. Tontine furiously.

Colonel Wolcott drew his right arm from her grasp, and with an angry word turned to Captain Moore, imploring him to remove her.

Before this could be effected Adela had distinctly said, "We think you are mistaken. We have learned nothing which leads us to suppose that our marriage has been dissolved. But if we are divorced, we shall be married over again as soon as we get ashore, Mrs. Tontine."

No sooner had Captain Moore managed to get the now hysterical lady below and to come back on deck, than the Robert E. Lee hove to, and made signals to have the Crimea's boats lowered. She signalled back that all the boats on her lee side were stove in. The Robert E. Lee then signified that she would send her own boats, and to "make ready to transfer the ladies."

By this time all the passengers on the Crimea were in the ship's waist, watching every movement of those who were bringing them succor. As the Robert E. Lee pitched, tossing her bows and martingale like an uneasy horse, and lifting and falling with each long heave of the surge, it seemed impossible that any boat could live, if

launched, in such a sea. One moment her bows would be completely out of water, showing the copper on her keel, and then the stern would be up, and the bows completely buried in a cloud of spray and foam.

The passengers on the *Crimea* did not see the actual lowering of the boats, as that took place on the lee side of the American vessel, but presently they came into view from round her bows, and a wild cheer rose up from two hundred voices on the wreck, and was answered by the boats' crews. There were two boats,—one of them a life-boat, capable of seating about thirty persons, the other a fine wooden boat with a square stern, carrying about twenty.

Laying to in such a gale increased the roll and pitch of the luckless *Crimea*. Several times the surge broke fairly over her starboard bulwark, as she heeled over to leeward, and more than one man was washed off overboard.

After the cheer, an almost unbroken silence prevailed among the passengers. It was no time for talk, indeed, for the noises of the tempest, and the groanings and creakings of the ship's timbers, made any voice pitched lower than a hail undistinguishable. Colonel Wolcott and his wife clung close together, and from time to time their eyes met in a long look.

On came the boats, rising like corks upon the

crest of the rollers, while the foam of their two white wakes opened out behind them like a quivering fan. The life-boat was repeatedly deluged with water, but her self-righting power, and the valves in her which let the water out, enabled her to free herself. The men who manned their boat knew her well and trusted her thoroughly.

The wooden boat was harder to manage, and made less rapid progress, being obliged to accommodate her course to the force of the wind, not daring to row in its teeth, and obliged from time to time to back water so as to let the heavier seas break in front of her rather than astern.

At length the life-boat came near enough to make in for the wreck. The sailors on board the *Crimea* made ready to pass her two hawsers, which would attach her to the lee side of the ship by her bows and stern. Still there was terrible danger of her being sucked under with the roll of the wrecked ship, or ground to pieces against her rudder.

As the passengers gazed down on the little craft, half hidden in spray and foam, their fears appeared to swallow up their new-formed certainty of safety. There was more actual terror exhibited now than had been shown before. Some of the women fainted, others went into hysterics. Many who had borne themselves with calmness and dignity through the long

hours of suspense, broke down as they realized the dangers that yet lay between themselves and safety.

"How many can you take?" hailed Captain Moore.

"Thirty; women and children only. If too crowded, we may get some of them washed out of her."

Orders were given to pass forward the women and children, — mothers first. It was too awful. The boat one moment would be lifted on a sea nearly up to the ship's bulwark, the next she would be at the bottom of a glistening gulf twenty feet below, hidden by the overlapping waves and the clouds of spray.

"I dare not! oh, I dare not!" cried the first poor woman led to the gangway, as she looked into the abyss where lay the tossing boat, and saw sailors standing up upon its thwarts, holding out their arms to catch her if she fell.

"I dare not! I dare not!" she shrieked. But two men, suspended over the great ship's side, slung by bow-lines, to assist in passing the women into the boat, seized her by the arms. The boat rose on the crest of a wave nearly to a level with the ship's deck, then she dropped into a trough, — a furrow between two waves, — sheer-
ing away from the ship till a great yawning gap was left between her and the hull of the *Crimea*,

over which the frightened woman hung suspended in mid-air, clinging to the men who held her up, and praying them to put her back upon the deck of the steamer.

Then, as the boat once more lifted, the men in her cried "Let go!" One sprang and caught the woman by the feet. She was pulled in, and fell, rolling down into the bottom with her preserver.

Another and another woman was passed in with varying success, some stretching out their arms to the ship, and calling on their husbands and their children to come too. There was no time for selection.

"Now, Mrs. Wolcott, now 's your chance!" cried Captain Moore, who was standing at the gangway.

Something in her face as she clung to her husband led him to say, —

"You next, ma'am," to a woman behind her, while he whispered to the colonel, —

"If you wait for the next boat, perhaps you can go together."

In spite of the many and great dangers of transferring such helpless passengers, about thirty women and children were taken on board the life-boat.

Some touching incidents occurred in the confusion. Emma Wylie, Mrs. Tontine's English governess, drew back when her turn (which was

the last) came, in order that the daughter of a woman already in the boat could go with her mother, saying simply, —

“I have no one to care for me. Let her go first.”

Ten women still remained on board when the life-boat was cast off from the Crimea. She shot clear in a moment. Those left behind stood watching her as she labored on her way back to her own vessel, climbing crest after crest of the big waves, like a fly, then plunging into those awful, beautiful hollows of green water and bright foam.

“They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths,” says the Psalmist. Has any description since been more perfect and concise and comprehensive? The multitude of words is weak to paint what the poet of nature’s God has given us in two touches.

Meantime, as those on the Crimea watched the course of their late companions, the wooden boat, which had been blown far out of its direct course, had gradually sheered in, and was now under her quarter.

It was understood that this boat might hold both men and women passengers, and not a few of the former jumped into the sea with the wild intention of securing a place on board of her. Captain Moore had already given permission to

his engineers and crew to save themselves in the Crimea's boats if they could get them into the water.

The scene of confusion became great and heart-rending. Some of those who jumped were sucked under the Crimea's keel, or were dashed to pieces against her quarter.

"Make haste, Mr. Dobson," cried the captain. "She'll be full, if you don't look sharp, before you get your places in her."

He was on the point of passing Adela to the men who were loading the boat, intending to follow, when he felt himself close clasped around his neck by a frantic woman, who cried, —

"Save me, Lancelot! You promised to save me!"

In vain he tried to disengage himself. In vain he felt that Adela, by this movement, had been pushed aside.

"Mrs. Tontine, I *will* not! Let me go! Let me go, I say! These men will —"

He did not finish his sentence. A dreadful wave made a clean sweep over the boat, and swelled over the bulwarks of the fast-filling Crimea, carrying overboard many of those nearest the gangway, including Captain Moore and Sir George Beevor. Colonel Wolcott, with Mrs. Tontine still clinging to his neck, half fell, half slipped over the vessel's side, and found himself,

half strangled, in the sea under the ship's quarter, with Mrs. Tontine clinging to his neck, and Jeb tugging at his beard and hair. They were thirty feet, it seemed to him, below the keel of the Crimea, and then in another moment were almost on a level with her gangway.

The men in the boat were bailing her with all their might. She had lost many of those who had secured places in her, but had righted, and was now tossing on the crest of a wave. Arms were stretched to pull him in with his burden, and at the same moment Sir George Beever was dragged in on the other side.

Consigning Mrs. Tontine (whose frantic grasp was loosened only by the friendly violence of the sailors) to two of the boatmen, he refused the arms held out to him, and as the next wave lifted him within reach of the main chains, clung to them, and began to swing himself up on to the deck of the Crimea. To his surprise, his four-footed companion followed him, securing foothold after foothold, holding by his jaws to chains or ropes, and giving an occasional low whine as his master lent a hand to him.

Few people were to be seen on board when they regained the deck. The Robert E. Lee's boat was already swept far away. Round the Crimea floated spars, planks, fragments of wreck, and the bodies of the drowned. Colonel Wolcott recog-

nized poor Captain Moore, far off on the crest of a big wave. He had probably been injured in going overboard, for he made no effort for self-preservation.

He cast his eyes along the deck. A drowned woman, holding a dead child, was washed against him. The few living passengers who remained clung together by the lee bulwark under the break of the poop; some feebly waved to those on board the distant boat, but there was no response, "nor any that answered them"; some kept their straining eyes fixed on the life-boat, just then transferring its passengers to the friendly vessel. It would come back again, they hoped, to take off those who remained; but the sky was growing darker every minute. Another gust was evidently gathering. All at once a blue flash of lightning shot zigzag into the sea; then came a thunder-crash, a sudden lull. The storm was gathering breath for a fresh blast. In a minute came a second flash, whose blaze lit the black abyss with a dreadful glow; and following this a furious down-pour of rain, which hid everything from sight. When the rain ceased, the mist rolled up rapidly and closed them in. The *Crimea* leaned over to leeward until the sea seemed on the same line as her bulwarks, pressed down by the great force of the storm, liable to broach to at any moment, and only saved, with a

tremendous lurch and crash, by some stroke of seamanship on the part of the one officer and the few seamen who still remained at their posts.

They put her before the gale and let her drive ; but she was separated forever from the Robert E. Lee.

CHAPTER XVI.

TILL DEATH DO PART.

And fear'st thou and fear'st thou?
And see'st thou and hear'st thou?
And drive we not free
O'er the terrible sea,
 I and thou?
One boat-cloak doth cover
The loved and the lover,
Their blood beats one measure,
They murmur proud pleasure,
 Soft and low.
While around — the lashed ocean,
Like mountains in motion,
Is withdrawn and uplifted,
Sunk, shattered, and shifted
 To and fro.

SHELLEY, *The Fugitives*.

FOR a few moments after Colonel Wolcott regained the deck he suffered an agony of apprehension. He could see nothing of Adela. The dog's instinct was more keen than his own. Jeb recognized Mel crouching under the lee bulwark near the poop, and with a low whine attempted to struggle down the deck, now sloping at a sharp angle from bows to stern. Near the steward, rigid in her grief, sat Adela, with her head upon her knees. Emma Wylie

lay half-crouching at her feet, and Adela had thrown an arm around her. Harrie Tontine stood near the group, with a scared face, and holding on by a stanchion,—her little heart bursting with indignation against the mother who had saved herself and left her to destruction. Some instinct recognizing the eternal laws of motherhood was strong upon her. A terror of forsakenness oppressed her, and she gazed with an expression of intense bitterness into the boiling sea. It seemed so cruel in her mother to have saved herself and left her child to perish. Her fears were swallowed up in a great sense of wrong.

“Mamma! mamma! mamma!” she shrieked. “Mr. Dobson, oh! what made you save mamma and let her leave *me*? She has gone away, and left me to be drowned! Mamma, mamma, come back! You *shall* come back! Don’t leave me! I won’t be drowned alone!”

Colonel Wolcott put his arm round the frantic child and tried to soothe her.

In the noise of the storm his steps and the child’s cries were both unheard by Adela and Emma Wylie. Their attitude expressed despondent resignation. Both were waiting for death without a murmur or a cry.

Adela sat, as we have said, on the deck, with her face bowed on her knees. Her husband knew that she was praying. If he had ever read

Southey's Doctor — which he had not — or could have thought of a quotation in a moment so supreme, he might have remembered Dr. Dove's exclamation, when recalling his brief love-dream for the burgomaster's daughter at Leyden, "God forgive me! For while she was worshipping the Almighty, I was worshipping her!" Wending his way to where she sat, he stood some moments in silence, his heart uttering an amen to her unknown petition. At last she looked up, with a wan, white face, and beheld him bending over her. Her flush was like a gleam of sunshine breaking through the clouds of a retreating storm.

Pointing in the direction where the Robert E. Lee had vanished, she said reproachfully, —

"Are you here, Lancelot? I was thanking God that you were safe. I thought, I hoped that by this time you were on board the other ship."

"Did you think I would let myself be saved without my wife?"

Then, in low tones, he whispered tender words; he called her wife and love,—his "dear, dear Adela." She raised her eyes and fastened them on his with one of those intense looks by which one soul sends a message into another soul. He took her in his arms, for she had risen; he kissed her; he murmured low, fond words in her ear,

while she clung closely to his breast, sobbing with strong emotion.

"It was so wrong of you to come back! You should have left me!"

He answered her with kisses.

"Nothing can part us now, Lancelot?"

"Nothing, my wife, — forever and forever and forever!"

Fresh kisses.

"Love's language always is *forever*," says a Frenchman, writing on divorce. "Adam said it with manly confidence to Eve as he pressed her to his bosom. Eve whispered it in a voice trembling with new emotion. *Forever* has been the key-note ever since in the song of happy lovers."

All this time the Crimea was bounding forward to her fate. Men stood with folded arms, attempting no control over the elements. All felt that they were sweeping to a common death, without a chance, without a hope, save in Heaven.

After a while a roll, even more fearful than any felt as yet, carried the port bulwark down so low that an immense green wave swelled over it, washing away everything it met, rushing like a cataract down the companion-way, and bursting through the broken hatchways and skylight of the engine-room, though these were protected by every spare sail to be had on board the steamer.

"I must put you out of the reach of seas like this," her husband said to Adela; and, drawing her more closely to himself, to prevent her seeing the ghastly objects which tossed in their wake, he went on. "Do you remember how the 'skipper's little daughter' was lashed to the mast in the ballad? I am going to lash you to this mast, love. If the ship goes down in the night, we shall go with her. It will be better than being buffeted about in such a sea. We will quietly sink, hand in hand,—my wife, my love, my life,—and die together."

"Better than living on estranged," she murmured.

"But I think she will last till daylight," he went on eagerly, "and before that time we may fall in with a ship. We are in the track of vessels. At least, you will not suffer from the cold, my love. The 'salt waves' will not be frozen on your breast, nor the 'salt tears' in your sweet eyes."

"Ah!" exclaimed Adela, "I have often thought of that prayer which we have been told to pray, that danger may not come upon us in the winter. All horrors are so aggravated by cold."

The only officer remaining on the ship was making his way aft, and passed them at that moment. Even in the awful pre-occupation of his own and the ship's peril, he looked at them with curiosity.

The colonel explained to him his plan for securing the women, speaking of Adela as his wife.

Mr. Wood, the officer, made no remark on the relationship, though in reply he addressed him, with a slight emphasis, as "Mr. Dobson," remarking that "Mrs. Wolcott" would suffer greatly from cramp and from exposure to the spray.

"But here on deck she is in constant peril from these frightful lurches, and no one any longer can go down below," said her husband.

Mr. Wood said no more, but turned into the captain's little den, and brought out blankets and railway rugs.

"Wrap the ladies and the child in these," he said. "Make mummies of them, that they may not feel the ropes, and draw one end of a rug over their faces."

He assisted in doing this, first for Adela, then for Emma Wylie, then for Harrie; and then, as Colonel Wolcott lifted each a few feet from the deck, he lashed her to the mast, and made fast, under the belaying pins, coils of rope, on which their feet might rest.

The colonel felt an unreasonable but intolerable pang of jealousy that anything which concerned the comfort of his wife, even the tying of a sailor's knot, should be thus taken from him. He would so gladly have performed every service for her in the few moments which remained to them.

Harrie resisted at first, but yielded on persuasion. She did not seem to feel fear, or to be conscious of physical suffering, but was much subdued by the sense of desertion. Her little heart, untaught, untrained, untamed, was benumbed by the shock to her instinctive trust.

"I don't see how she could! I don't see how she could!" she sobbed from time to time. "I thought all mammas took care of their little girls, but my mamma has saved herself and left me!"

"Horrible woman!" whispered Colonel Wolcott to Adela.

She answered him by a caress, but smiled, and said, "Poor woman!" very softly.

"Could we get anything to eat, Mel?"

"Dunno, Mas' Lancelot. I'll done try get inside the steward's pantry."

But Mel could not succeed in forcing open the door that led into the pantry. He brought back only a few spoiled biscuit, which they shared among them.

Between decks the water, colored black by coal, had broken through the bulkheads, and was setting everything movable afloat, breaking up even the iron flooring and iron stairways of the engine-room, and making a loud, melancholy noise as it plunged from side to side of the vessel. It seemed a deep, black tarn.

"Real devilish black, like de ole pit, Mas'

Lancelot," said Mel. "I'se 'fraid look down de hatchway, it's so black!"

When the women had been made safe, as far as the pitching and tossing of the ship was concerned, Colonel Wolcott left them for a moment, hoping to be more successful than Mel in his search for food or brandy. He made his way down to his own state-room, and then tried again to force the pantry-doors, in which he was not successful.

By this time the thunder-storm had rolled away. The dim clouds which had contained the tempest had parted, lightened of their wrath; and the setting sun looked forth between their rifts on the ruin that the day had made.

Finding he could get nothing to eat except some oranges, Colonel Wolcott went again into his state-room, took a few papers from his trunk, and then, his hands trembling with haste, tumbled out a quantity of clothes.

Adela had begged that he would put on dry clothing, and he now obeyed her by dressing himself from head to foot as if upon his wedding-day. He even smoothed his hair and passed a comb through his superb expanse of beard. One other thing he searched for in his trunk and found, and then he hurried back to Adela.

It was the impulse to pay her a last tribute, to look his very best for this once in her eyes, to

act the lover to his wife for the first time and the last, before they died together.

He had tried to get into her state-room to secure for her some little comforts, but he found that was not to be done. Two feet of water was swashing about the ladies' cabin, with books, boxes, shoes, chairs, and other light objects floating in it, while on the lee side all the heavy furniture had broken through the bulkheads or was piled against the doors of the state-rooms. He managed to get pillows and blankets from the berths upon the weather-side of the cabin, and then struggled back to the deck.

The object which he had taken from his trunk was an Indian shawl, — such a shawl as seldom finds its way into the lands of sunset, costly and rare even to an Indian eye. It was the gift of a rajah, who had bestowed it on his Frankish guest as an offering of hospitality.

Colonel Wolcott had laughed a little in his sleeve over the gift. He now remembered this with a pang ; he had smiled, not sighed, to think that he was without ties to any woman, had felt amused by the unsuitableness of the princely gift to his bachelor condition. Now, with strange pride and joy and grief, he drew it forth for his love's winding-sheet.

Returning to her side, he saw by her eyes that his brief absence had disquieted and alarmed

her. He spread his mantle of the East over her from head to foot. Even at such a moment she was too truly a woman not to feel delight in the costly offering.

"O Lancelot, is it for me?" she asked. "How superb it is, how soft and beautiful!"

"Thank God that I have yet the chance to give it to you, my wife!" he cried, clasping his arms around her waist and resting his face beside her knees. Her little feet nestled into his bosom. From time to time he looked into her eyes, which smiled back love upon him. The spray dashed over them, the billows raged, and the ship rolled; but their souls, parted for so long, drew together like two water-drops at this crisis of their fate, and were fused into one another. They forgave without reason, they comprehended without speech, they trusted where they had no power to see. When did lovers negotiate reconciliation? When did affection ever need a satisfactory explanation of past misunderstandings?

"Are you as comfortable as I can make you, dearest?"

"Ah, Lancelot, I am happier than I have been for years. It seems strange to be so happy. I wonder if it is wrong to be so? But for me, you might have saved yourself. Perhaps God means to save us, after all. He has heard my other prayers. He has given me back you!"

They put no questions to the officer now walking on the poop, who paused occasionally at the taffrail to note the settling of the laboring vessel. He, too, was "strengthening up his courage to his fate," as he thought of the bright promise of his life so soon to end, of the family who, far away "down East," would mourn his fate.

The Crimea no longer pitched so heavily ; for the last twenty-four hours she had lain almost on an even keel, but her stern was settling deep, and from time to time she gave an awful roll.

No one was at the helm. The wheel had been lashed fast by a stout hawser. Attempts to bail or pump the water out had been given up as hopeless.

Now and then Harrie uttered a little wail. Then Colonel Wolcott, from where he lay, would put out his right arm and clasp her fingers. The sense of his protection seemed to comfort her. From time to time the dog, too, howled and whined. Adela was happy, Colonel Wolcott anxious, Emma Wylie calm : they were drifting into death, astonished that death, the great event of life, should come to them so easily.

Adela had almost ceased to pray ; her brain had "grown too tired to understand" ; her own will and her own heart seemed merged into the Will Omnipotent and the Love Eternal.

"Adela," her husband whispered once in the

lull of the gale, "let me hear you say once more that you love me!"

And with the old caress she answered, "Dear Lancelot, I have prayed daily, since a few days after you went away from us, that I might live to hear you say those same words to me."

"And suppose — suppose we should be saved — suppose I should again turn out a harsh, unsympathizing husband — suppose that I should ever be unkind to you?"

"Then I will think of my own shortcomings in our old married life. I will remember that you are *my own husband*. You do not know the strength it puts into a woman to remember those three words. You are as much my own by the will of God as if we had been born mated to each other."

"This is the proudest moment of my life."

"My happiest," she said, and laughed a faint, sweet laugh. "Who could imagine we should be happy at such a dreadful time? Oh, I should be so glad, except for Lance! How can I give up my boy? How can I bear to leave him?"

Then, after a pause, she added, "But it is better for Lance even to have us die together, than to see us living estranged. A house divided against itself cannot shelter its children. We must give him up as our joint dying gift to his Heavenly Father. His grandmother and grand-

father will be good to him, still I wish you could have chosen him a guardian. To be a very rich young American is a great trial."

She paused; then suddenly her self-control gave way. "I cannot bear it!" she cried. "God, give me faith and trust enough to do what millions of other poor mothers do in faith, and be willing to give my child up on this strange death-bed! God has heard all my other prayers. He has given me you back, I know He will take care of Lance for me! It is easier to trust him to God than to leave him to man. But I have hoped against hope, ever since he was born, that I might live to see my Lancelots proud of one another."

With that she broke for the first time into wild weeping. When she grew calmer under his comforting, he said,—

"Sing me that hymn you sang on Sunday, three days ago, Adela. It went to my heart. There is hope in its words."

"Ah!" she exclaimed, "it is a hymn for mourning, a burial-service hymn. Was it for preparation?"

"We'll take it for an omen," said her husband. "To me it conveyed hope in every word."

And then her voice rose clear and high, her whole soul pouring into the notes as a bird pours his heart out in his melody:—

"Safe home, safe home in port!
Rent cordage, shattered deck,
Torn sails, provisions short,
And only not a wreck!
But oh, the joy, upon the shore
To tell our voyage troubles o'er!"

The song floated to the ears of the forlorn group of men huddled round the foremast. They raised their heads to listen. One or two essayed a feeble cheer.

Colonel Wolcott responded only with a sob.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON A REEF.

Ah! Lord, for Thy love's sake
Give not this darling child of Thine
To care less reverent than mine!

PROCTER, *Faithful Forever.*

AFTER midnight Adela became restless, moving her arms and hands, apparently without purpose, and muttering low, as if in troubled sleep. Her husband could not make out many of her words. The night was intensely dark. When he spoke to her she did not answer him.

The strain of so many hours of exposure and suspense, the cruel and perpetual dash of the spray, and the want-of food were telling fearfully on her strength. Once in a while he thought he could distinguish a low moan of "Water, water!" thirst probably being aggravated by the constant salt wetting.

Harrie seemed to feel physical suffering less keenly than her companions. Miss Wylie's lips

were closed in stern endurance. She was a small, soft, plump creature in appearance, trained in the self-restraints of English conventional propriety, and braced to the endurance of a martyr.

When morning broke with a faint glimmer over their port bow, before it was possible to see near objects on the deck, Colónel Wolcott glanced up at the sky above them. There were rugged rents and rifts here and there in the dun mass, but its prevailing tint was a lurid slate-color, with low edgings of darker cloud fringing three parts of the horizon.

The spray continued to be, as it had been all night, intolerable, wetting them through and through, like a prolonged shower-bath. The pale daylight grew, and at last Lancelot could see his companions. The rugs which protected them had fallen back, and each face lay on its wet pillow, calm, white, and still as though carved in marble; their long hair hung down in wet strands, encrusted with salt spray, and too heavy to float, and all but Adela seemed to sleep.

Emma Wylie roused first. Her waking glance was full of great awe. Adela's eyes were open, — wide open, — but neither memory, expression, nor intelligence beamed from them. Her husband gave a wild cry as he beheld her staring vacantly at him.

The cry woke Harrie, who had fallen into a

troubled sleep, and Miss Wylie feebly moved and tried to turn her head.

Worse than the worst that he had feared had come upon them. Adela was dying, and in her last moments she would never know how passionately he loved her.

He glanced despairingly along the deck. During the darkness it had been swept by more than one great sea. The wreck had twice broached to, then quivered, righted, and gone on. He had fancied during the black night that shrieks sounded above the creaking of joints and the howling of the tempest, — shrieks, first shrill, then fainter, dying away along the foaming wake. But he might have been mistaken: his hearing had grown confused in the loud jangle of discordant noises.

A few forms, he could not tell how many, were still gathered round the stump of the mast, and all were gazing eastward.

Upon the quarter-deck no one remained except themselves and Mel, who had not followed his master's example and advice to lash himself into the rigging. He was lying on the deck, with the dog licking his face and whining piteously. At first Colonel Wolcott fancied that the poor fellow was dead; but he was only in a negro sleep, which is almost as profound as death, and can be taken at any moment, like that of an animal.

At his master's call he roused himself, raised his head, and looked about him. He sprang up, instantly, with a sharp cry. His eye, which had been trained to some experience on shipboard, saw that the men about the mast were intently gazing at a low speck in the far distance, a light line on the horizon to the east. He waved his cap, and was the first to shout "Land Ho!"

The fog was lifting. In half an hour, plain before them, lay a long line of reef, — a rugged ridge of rocks, dark and grim, with pools and straits and fiords on a tiny scale, running up into the hollows between the ridges.

On to this reef the Crimea was drifting headlong. The sea was still boiling and foaming, the wind high; it had shifted a little, and was now a few points west of south.

"This is the east coast of Ireland, I suppose, Mel?" said his master.

"Yes, Mas' Lancelot. Dere's where dis ship gwine to lay her bones. She'll strike her ole ribs broadside on dem rocks and go to pieces."

Nothing but a miracle, as it now seemed, could save them. The ship had not a boat left. Yet to a landsman there is an instinctive comfort in the sight of land, even if that land be a lee shore. To Colonel Wolcott, who had lived much on the Atlantic coast, with nothing but the sea between him and the same rocks that he now gazed upon,

there was even a kind of reassurance in the familiar sound of the low roar of surf and the dash of breaking billows.

His first care was to unfasten the women. The ship was now much steadier than she had been, and they could keep their footing. Miss Wylie and Harrie were too cramped and stiff to stand, and very weak and cold. Both were incapable of active thought or physical exertion. Adela shivered painfully, uttering incoherent words, and occasionally singing snatches of hymns; but her bodily powers seemed greater than those of the other two, and she stood up, clinging to her husband.

The little group awaited the moment of the crash with their eyes fixed upon the reef, especially on one great rock, which stood out far to sea, captain or sentinel to all the rest, and over which dashed a cloud of spray as the full force of the sea broke against it with a hollow roar.

The great hull of the steamship rolled majestically in, drifting before the gale directly towards the centre of the reef, settling slowly into the hollows of the waves with each lift of the green heave under her.

As they rose on the waves, houses, and even people became visible on the land beyond the reef; but the shore was parted from the rocks by a quarter of a mile of comparatively quiet sea,

the reef forming a breakwater to a pretty little bay. A flagstaff had been planted in the middle of the reef, upon one of its highest ridges.

A sort of dull impatience took possession of Colonel Wolcott. He longed to strike and have it over. But the sailors, few in number as they were, animated by some fragment of last hope, stimulated by the sight of a new danger, or impelled, perhaps, merely by the sailor instinct to do their duty to the bitter end, made a further attempt to save the vessel.

If it were possible to anchor, or to round the point of the reef between the outlying black rock and the main ridge, they might yet be saved. But six men were left with Mr. Wood, third officer, — too small a force to work the ship successfully in any case; against such odds, almost helpless. Two anchors were thrown out, and there was an instant of hope while one of them seemed to hold; but presently the drifting recommenced, and it was evident that the anchor was dragging. Meanwhile the attempt was made to set a top-sail, but again and again the wet and heavy canvas tore itself out of their hands; the thunder of its flapping rose louder than the voices of the winds or surf, and all efforts to alter the course of the ship, and to steer her towards the west end of the reef, proved in vain. She rocked and tossed, she backed like an uneasy horse, ship-

ping great seas after each attempt; but every time her head fell off again in a shower of foam. Again and again they tried, and again they failed. At last they gave it up, and let her drift unchecked to her doom. Each time she lifted on a wave the grim rocks rose nearer to her bows, white as a bed of wool with spray and foam.

The fear of death was strong on Colonel Wolcott, who had now so much for which he wished to live,—stronger than it had been until that moment. His heart swelled with a great repentance. There were no German questionings to disturb his spirit as he stood looking eternity in the face, measuring with his eye the lessening space between Adela and himself and the last enemy.

The tide was almost at the full, and in many places on the rocks dulse-weed lifted its long, leathery strands upon the heave. The reef seemed solid rock except for this draping of dull brown. When the ship struck, there would not be even the poor comfort of a foot or two of mother earth beneath them to soften the shock and receive their bones.

A man, the sturdiest seaman left on the wreck, was holding on to a splinter of the foremast, with his feet planted in jags and rents made when the spar had broken off. He, too, was keeping a lookout upon the reef, and calculating what remnant of life remained to them.

The tide sucked her in fast. The boom on the rocks sounded nearer and louder each second, thundering their summons to eternity.

Another moment and the death-blow fell. A tremendous roller lifted the Crimea over a low outer line of rocks, whose heads just showed themselves above the surge, and carried her half way over the reef, raising her bodily. There was a mighty heave, a grind, a crack. The ship quivered, and then lifted, with a strange impulse, and crashed down into a hollow between two rocks, where she stuck hard and fast. Her fate was sealed, her race was run. The elements might work their will upon her. She gave a heavy lurch to port, and settled herself to rest, like a wounded sea-monster lying down to die.

The concussion as she struck threw every one on deck against the bulwarks or upon their faces. The ship lay motionless, held fast in the grim jaws of the reef, at an angle of about twenty-five degrees.

For one moment the bitterness of death was tasted by all on board, except Adela, who was unconscious of all sensation. The moment passed. To their surprise, life was still left them. The ship had not broken up with the shock. The men forward made signs to Colonel Wolcott to bring the ladies to the fore-castle, for the fore part of the ship was tight wedged be-

tween the rocks, while the stern, which was still at the mercy of the waves, might break off at any moment, as the tide ebbed from under the vessel.

They could now plainly see people watching them from the shore, which, with its little village under a round green hill, lay beyond the bay formed by the reef, at least half a mile away from them. When the tide at length began to ebb, it became evident that preparations were making to launch a boat.

The fishermen of the place were coming off to help them. Very tiny looked their little craft as she danced under her reefed lug-sail over the rollers, which, even in the sheltered inner bay, were still high and dangerous. It was evident to those on board the *Crimea* that to get either from the ship's stern into the boat, or from her bows upon the reef, where, indeed, the slippery dulse-weed afforded no secure foothold, would be equally perilous; nor even, had they all been landed on some dry point of the reef, was it easy to see how to transfer helpless passengers into the boat from its steep iron edge.

It was also more difficult than any landsman can understand for the fishing skiff to approach the wreck while she lay in her present position. She must have been dashed to pieces had her crew tried to round the reef in the wind's teeth.

They knew better than to tempt fate by such a venture, and contented themselves with beating towards the inner side of the reef, keeping as much as possible under shelter of the rocks that formed a break-water, and there lay to.

Unless the men on the Crimea could effect a landing on the oozy, slippery ledge, and thence transfer themselves to the boat as she lay under the reef, which on the land side seemed almost perpendicular, those on board now began to think that nothing could be done for their relief until the storm was spent, before which time it was evident the wreck must go to pieces.

"If a rope could be got from the end of the mainyard and made fast to the flagstaff on the reef," thought Colonel Wolcott, "we might be passed along it by a 'basket' made of a small sail, or some other sailor's device, and then by a similar contrivance they might get us into the boat upon the other side." But how was a hawser to be got round the flagstaff? The sea was still breaking over the reef where the ship lay. The mainyard seemed on a level with the foot of the staff, which was planted on the highest rock of the reef, about fifty yards away. The Irish fishermen were apparently not fertile in resources, or, with the wrecker's instinct, were waiting for the breaking up of the vessel to secure her cargo. Even if willing to afford help, they evi-

dently required direction from those on board the ship, and communication was, so far, impossible.

One or two of the Crimea's seamen made the attempt to land upon the reef, but it proved utterly impossible. The rocks, dashed over by a furious surf, and slippery with slimy weed, gave no footing.

"Our only chance," said Colonel Wolcott, after watching these attempts for some time in silence, "is for some strong swimmer to find an opening through the rocks, or to weather the reef and communicate with the fishermen. Since their boat has got under the lee yonder, they can see neither us nor our signals. The men in her may have some plan with which we can co-operate. They are doing nothing, so far as we can tell. Very likely they only half understand our situation."

He looked at the sailors as he spoke, but was resolved to go himself if no more suitable volunteer should offer. His eye lighted upon Mel, who was already stripping off his clothing.

Mel was very agile, and in his boyish days had been renowned among his associates for swimming feats.

"I 'se gwine, Mas' Lancelot," he said. "You stay with Miss Adela. Me an' de pup will do it, if so be it can be done!"

He turned quickly, shook the hand of his mas-

ter ; and then, with his bare feet pattering along the deck, ran down the steep slope from the fore-castle to the stern, flung off his remaining garments on the poop, and, calling to the dog, sprang over the taffrail into the water. He held the slack of a light rope in his hand. The dog plunged after him.

The surf was still terrible. Luckily, the tide was now at ebb, but the force of the wind drove in the waves with fury.

But for the help of Jeb, Mel, after his plunge, would have been dashed back against the chains of the rudder. Again and again he was whirled past the yielding, oozy weed that draped the reef, snatched at its treacherous strands, and was washed back again, grasping a handful of wet dulse.

His shipmates watched him from the wreck, too breathless, too absorbed, for hail or cheer. But the struggle was unequal. At last one vast billow was seen to spin him round, as it rolled up after whirling him against the reef, and then it bore him back, back, back into the sea. He disappeared, with a black spot that darted after him, through surge and foam. They saw another roller lift up two black specks a quarter of a mile away, and after that only the surf could be seen beating along the granite rocks of a lee shore.

After an interval of suspense, Jeb was perceived

running along the bare part of the reef, whining, and begging help from those on board.

"If we could get a rope round the dog's neck, and make him reeve it round the flag-pole, that might save us," said a foremast man. But in vain they called, in vain they coaxed or threatened. Jeb was the dog of the ship no longer, he was the friend of Mel; he would do nothing but run back and forth along the water's edge, slipping, whining, and mutely begging for aid, while on the other side of the reef the Irish boat lay tossing uselessly with her crew, willing, perhaps, but not knowing how to afford the longed-for help.

Colonel Wolcott, since the disappearance of Mel, had been absorbed in caring for his wife, who every moment was growing weaker. He now roused himself and looked around him. His quick glance took in the difficulty. He placed Adela, with a look of earnest pleading, in the arms of Emma Wylie, and ran out upon the bowsprit which overhung the ridge. There were several men upon it, trying to coax the dog to come nearer to them.

"Let me try," said the colonel. He whistled. The animal stopped at once and pricked his ears. Colonel Wolcott whistled again. The dog drew nearer, crouching cautiously, with a low whine. One of the men far out upon the bowsprit threw a noose over his neck and captured him.

"That will do," said Colonel Wolcott. "Pay out your line, now. Don't draw him in. I'll manage him."

He directed one of the men to bring him a gun, which had been loaded and laid in the captain's cabin to be used, if necessary, in making signals. Again he whistled. Again, bewildered and surprised, the dog stood still and looked at him.

Then, selecting a gull flying low over the crest of the reef not far from the flagstaff, he pointed it out to Jeb, shouting, "Dead bird!" and fired. The instinct of a well-trained retriever, and his obedience to the order of the master who had trained him to his work, prevailed. Jeb bounded in the direction in which the bird had fallen. He passed the flagstaff, impeded but not stopped by the wet cord which trailed behind him.

As soon as he was safely past the staff, Colonel Wolcott recalled him. The dog paused. The colonel whistled again. Jeb came back slowly, but he returned without doubling round the pole, which was not what they had hoped of him. Again Colonel Wolcott shot and hied him on. This time, when the return signal was given, Jeb obeyed the motion of his master's hand, and returned on the right of the flagstaff, thus reeving the cord round it.

The men cheered. Colonel Wolcott encour-

aged him. Nearly choked by the tightening of the cord as he dragged it round the flag-pole, he came nearer to the vessel. Communication with the land, if they could secure this cord, was now attained.

One of the sailors lowered himself daringly from the bowsprit, till able to catch hold of the rope's end. He cut it loose, not being able to preserve his balance with the weight of the dog added, and his comrades all began to haul in, with a loud cheer. Soon a stout hawser was safe reeved round the flagstaff, along which several sailors swung themselves hand over hand.

Once at the flagstaff, it was easy to run a line out to the Irish boat, now lying in smooth water under the lee of the reef, which was very steep on the side towards the village.

The tide, as we have said, was going down, and the surf no longer made a clean breach over the reef. A "basket" for the women was quickly improvised out of a studding-sail, and was worked by a guide-line along the hawser, attended by two seamen.

Miss Wylie and Harrie Tontine went first, that Miss Wylie might be ready to receive Adela, whom the sailors would not allow to be accompanied by her husband. They feared to put too great a strain upon the line of communication. He therefore was obliged to consign her to the

"basket," wrapping the India shawl around her carefully. On the next trip he followed her. Then the "basket," after two or three more trips to the ship to bring off landsmen, was attached to another hawser, one end of which was fastened to a point of rock on the land side of the reef, close to the little boat which lay in waiting. In a few minutes the ladies and Mr. Wood, the officer, were on board of it, standing across the little bay in the direction of the fishing village.

Two or three of the Irish sailors, beside the crew of the *Crimea*, Colonel Wolcott, and the other male passengers, were left, waiting for its next trip. Mr. Wood, indeed, had purposely pushed off the boat to avoid being accompanied by "Mr. Dobson."

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW WOMAN MAY PUT ASUNDER.

Not each for each shall live, but each for other.

MRS. JULIA WARD HOWE, *Words for the Hour.*

AT first Colonel Wolcott was wild with vexation at being thus forced to let his helpless wife go ashore without himself to keep guard over her. But he recollected that he had forfeited the right to keep her, in sickness or in health, and had no right to interfere with the young officer who had assumed the charge of her. He was told also that the boat was very small, and that Mr. Wood had gone with the ladies in order to be able to telegraph at once to the owners and underwriters.

He next endeavored to make arrangements for sending out a party in quest of poor Mel, but found that none of the sailors were willing to waste time on an uncertain and perilous search for the body of an under steward. They had strict orders, they stated, from their officer to stay and look after the vessel. The fishermen, very possibly, might be wreckers, who, if un-

watched, would quickly reap this harvest of the ocean.

That Mel's body was on the reef the colonel was convinced, and he thought it possible that life might still be in him. He felt that he owed careful search, not only to the brave fellow who had been prompted to a gallant deed by attachment to himself, but also to the poor dog, who was howling on the ridge of the reef, and whose fidelity had saved all their lives.

He applied for aid to the Irish fishermen. They had brought water, bread, and whiskey in their boat, and their first care had been to give the women nourishment, which had wonderfully restored Harrie and her governess, and somewhat revived Adela, whom, through his glass, her husband could see lying quietly in the stern-sheets, with her head on the lap of Emma Wylie.

The Irishmen were as little disposed as the sailors to search the reef for a dead body. Colonel Wolcott then proposed to go himself, and found a volunteer to accompany him in one of the Irish party, a tall, strong man, who provided both himself and his companion with a pair of stout spiked brogans and a long pole, like an alpenstock, fitted with a bill-hook at one end.

Staff in hand, and shod like an Alpine climber, Colonel Wolcott, having refreshed himself by food and drink, set out on his search.

As they descended the ridge on which the morning sun was now beating, they had a full side view of their stranded ship, whose vast size and enormous height were astonishing as thus seen.

What a prodigy of wood and iron she seemed ! There she lay, with her seams opening, the sea rushing in upon her wave after wave, like battalions reinforced by fresh battalions, each billow dealing a resounding blow upon the yawning timbers. Her joints were all agape, her wounds were widening.

"Thank God!" said Colonel Wolcott, with a sigh of relief. "Adela is safely out of her."

The dog was waiting for them on the ridge, and seemed to know their errand ; he led them along the reef, where again and again, but for their shoes and poles, they must have lost their footing. Colonel Wolcott had a ship's glass with him, and from the higher points made a careful survey of the rocks, but nothing was to be seen of Mel. Still, dead or alive, he must be somewhere near, they thought, for the dog ran back to fawn on them and trembled with excitement.

At last they reached a sort of gully in the rocks into which the waves foamed furiously. Across this the dog took his way, jumping from shelf to shelf, and the men followed. When they

came to the edge of the gully, they looked down into a tiny cave or bay, roofed with black stones and floored with sparkling shingle. From this point, black rocks, invisible at high tide, seemed to extend far out to sea, rising, like the backs of porpoises, above the slaty blue of the ocean.

Stooping over and looking down as the dog came to a point, they saw poor Mel immediately below them.

The dog, as they guessed, had dragged him out of the surf, for there were the marks of his paws above the water-line. He sprang down when he perceived that they saw what he had come to show them, and threw himself upon the body, licking its face with moans that were almost like a human cry.

Poor Mel lay with his face upturned to the sun's glare, his legs outstretched in a small pool left under a round rock by the retreating tide.

The Irishman and Colonel Wolcott raised him. His face looked very calm. His wet limbs shone like a bronze statue in the sun. There were many wounds about his face and breast, but none that seemed enough to kill him.

"He is not dead. His heart beats! I can feel it!" cried the colonel.

They had brought whiskey with them, some of which they now poured down his throat. After a while he opened his eyes, but his left arm hung

powerless. They put it in a sling, and with difficulty and danger, and at great cost of time, got him over the reef to the flagstaff, when his shipmates relieved them, and carried him down to the landing-place, where the boat was now waiting to receive a second load.

Colonel Wolcott suffered during this interval an intolerable agony of mind. Mel, saved, though still insensible, no longer occupied his thoughts. Paddy Byrne, the Irishman, had told him there was a doctor in the village. What might that authority, in whose hands life and death seemed to lie, have said by this time of the condition of Adela?

The village before them appeared a straggling hamlet, desolate and wild enough to be a nest of wreckers. He remembered, with sudden alarm, that Adela had valuable rings upon her fingers, and that a priceless shawl was wrapped about her.

He questioned the men as, relieved of the burden of poor Mel, they went down the slope of the reef together.

The men told him that the ladies would most probably be taken to the house of the rector, Mr. Darrell, and pointed it out on the side of a round hill, at the foot of which nestled the village.

"Is Mr. Darrell the Protestant rector of the place?"

"Shure he's no less, may it plaze your honor."

"Has he a wife?"

"True for your honor, and too true," was the answer.

"Is she not a good woman?"

"I've nothing anent her. I would not be asy if I got any one's ill will."

"Will she take good care of my wife?"

"That I could n't say, at all, at all. That 'll be as it happens, plaze your honor."

By further pains and pressing, Colonel Wolcott got himself "discomfortably" informed that Mrs. Darrell was a woman very unpopular among her Roman Catholic neighbors.

"His rivirince, Mr. Darrell, was a *quite* man," Paddy said, "but his lady was the divil for meddling. She had n't no childer, an' no rale work at all to do in life, and was always for making some trouble out of nothing. She'd be good enough belike to the strange lady for a time, that is, if she took a fancy to her. But it was bad luck for them all when she came into the village. It was a pity that the likes of her could n't be put to slape for twenty or thirty hours in the twenty-four hours of the day." Paddy evidently thought that even the tender mercies of the rector's wife were precarious and undesirable.

"And about this poor mulatto boy who is my

servant, and my dog," said Colonel Wolcott, more and more anxious to get back to Adela. "How can I get them cared for? Is there an inn, or even a pot-house, in the village?"

"There is n't a public in the place at all, at all, your honor. There's a shebeen, but that's two miles off, over the hill, an' it has n't but the one room in it. Anybody will be proud to take the dog and man-servant for your honor."

"Won't you do it yourself, Paddy?" the colonel said. "I'll pay you handsomely. Have you a cottage?"

He hesitated.

"With all the pleasure in life, only may be your honor's servant would be after wanting more nor the likes of us could offer him."

"Your cottage is better than the hut where he was born, on my estate," said Colonel Wolcott, making a mental inventory of the rags and make-shifts of Mel's native cabin. "What he wants is care and kindness. I shall pay for these, and for any comforts he may need, and for the doctor."

He put his hand into his breast-pocket, and then refrained from drawing out his purse, for his doubts had returned, and he recollected that it might be dangerous to let it be known that he had money about him.

By this time they had reached the water's edge. The men in the boat told him that the

ladies and little girl had been carried to Mr. Darrell's house, and pointed up the hill to a white edifice of some pretensions.

"His rivirince, Father Joe, is waiting at the landing-place," they said, "to offer his house to the jantleman."

"He is very kind and hospitable," said Colonel Wolcott, "but I shall go with my wife if the rector can take me in; if not, I must stay as near to her as possible."

He said the same thing, on landing, to Father Joe, who met him on the little jetty with a hospitable invitation. The father then offered to see after Mel and the dog, who, under his superintendence, were transported to Paddy Byrne's cottage, while Colonel Wolcott set off at full speed to the rectory. The hill was very steep, and as he mounted he realized, for the first time, the full measure of his weakness and exhaustion.

"There's Mr. Dobson, I declare, coming up here," cried Harrie Tontine, who was terribly herself by this time, and was looking out of the rectory window. "He's the man we had on board under a false name. They said he was a thief or a defaulter, or something of that kind. He acted real queer about Mrs. Wolcott. First place he frightened her, and tried to put his arm round her on the hurricane deck one

evening, and the officers were going to interfere, when I knocked down both of them. Then afterwards, when he tied us up in the rigging, and we could not help ourselves, he kept kissing her and kissing her like everything."

"Little girl," cried the rector's lady, "I trust he is not coming to my house. Shelah, Shelah!" to her maid, "don't let that man come inside of this door. Do you hear now?"

Colonel Wolcott, panting and very pale, entered the wicket-gate of the rector's garden. His appearance was not in his favor. The new clothes of the previous night were dirty, wet, and ragged; his beard was matted, full of sand and sea-weed; he had lost his own hat, and had accepted the tarpaulin of a fisherman.

To his eager, breathless questions, "How is my wife, Mrs. Wolcott? Can I see her?" Shelah was a good deal puzzled to reply.

"The lady is very ill, sir. I was to say as you could not come in. You had better come again and see the master."

"I cannot go in? Who says so?" said Colonel Wolcott, putting his shoulder against the sill of the door. "Ask Mrs. Darrell to speak to me. Say that I am Colonel Wolcott, the lady's husband."

At this Mrs. Darrell, who had been listening behind her parlor-door, came from her hiding-place, with Harrie grinning behind her.

"Madam, I am Colonel Wolcott. Have the goodness to tell me how my wife is, and to show me to her room."

"Go away, sir!" she said sternly. "Do not intrude your most unworthy self into the presence of a lady who may be dying, for all you know. Your character has been exposed, and is known. Leave my house immediately!"

"Madam," cried Colonel Wolcott, "you are under some very serious misapprehension. I am Colonel Wolcott, the Asiatic traveller, whose book you may possibly have heard of. I can refer you to the American ambassador in London, or to my publisher. The lady under your care is Mrs. Wolcott, my wife, from whom I have been parted during my wanderings for the past nine years. I demand to see her. You have no right to keep me from her."

"My mamma said that Mrs. Wolcott was n't your wife," put in Harrie Tontine at this juncture.

"There, sir, you hear what the child says about you. Go away at once, or I will have you put out of my gate by force. You are not the man that you profess to be. You are Mr. Dobson, an impostor, a man under a false name, a defaulter and thief for aught I know, or an escaped convict, perhaps a ticket-of-leave-man, a murderer!"

At this moment her raised voice attracted

Emma Wylie, who looked out of an upper window, — the window of Mrs. Wolcott's room.

"Miss Wylie," cried out Colonel Wolcott, "for humanity's sake, tell me how she is, what the doctor thinks of her!"

"He thinks she must be kept very quiet, Mr. Dobson; and your voice has made her restless," replied Miss Wylie.

"Come down, then, if you please," said he.

A moment after Miss Wylie came downstairs, and stood in the entry.

His voice was hoarse and hard, his eyes blood-shot and angry. He restrained himself, however, and in a whisper said excitedly, —

"Tell this — this lady, Miss Wylie, who I dare say means well, that Mrs. Wolcott repeatedly acknowledged me to be her husband."

Emma Wylie hesitated.

"Speak, Miss Wylie!"

"Indeed, Mr. Dobson," she said, bursting into tears, "I cannot bear to give you pain. I owe you a great deal. You saved our lives. But I cannot say what is not true. I do not remember Mrs. Wolcott's saying that she was your wife, though during our last dreadful day and night many things that I did not hear may have been going on between you. I understood Mrs. Tontine, who often spoke about it in our state-room, that Mrs. Wolcott was a lady who had been di-

vorced from her husband, who was somewhere in India ; that she was very rich, and was going home to her family."

"But *I* am Colonel Wolcott, her husband ; and I do not think that we have been divorced. If we have, we shall be remarried immediately. I only ask to see her, to be with her, till she gets better."

"It is as disreputable a piece of business as any I ever heard of," said Mrs. Darrell. "I don't want any divorced people in my house,—nor any impostors, either. Here, Mr. Darrell, Mr. Darrell!" she cried, as that gentleman came slowly into his own garden, "what must we do about this fellow? Here is a man who will not go away, who says the lady who is so ill is his wife, and wants me to let him go up to her room. The child and the young lady both declare that he is not her husband ; that she is a divorced woman whom he has been paying attentions to on board the steamer ; that he is travelling under a false name, and is a disreputable character. They knew him on board ship as Mr. Dobson."

By this time the strain of so many hours of exertion, privation, and excitement had told on Colonel Wolcott. He staggered, and leaned, faint and sick, against the door.

"Allow me, sir," he said, "to explain the matter privately."

"Indeed, you shall do no such thing, Mr. Darrell. Anybody can take you in, as we all know," cried his wife.

"My dear, my dear!" said Mr. Darrell. "Softly, my dear, I beg of you. Remember the poor man has just been through great suffering and exposure. If I may so express myself without irreverence, 'a night and a day he has been in the deep'; and" (lowering his voice) "I have reason to believe he is a little out of his mind."

Here Harrie, Mrs. Darrell, and Miss Wylie put their heads together, as he whispered for their information: "They say down on the beach that he has a monomania for claiming everything. He spoke of *his* servant, who turns out to be the ship's steward; and of *his* dog, a Gordon setter, that has been ten voyages in the Crimea. They say he offered to pay for attendance on the dog and steward, but did not show his money. Let me get him away quietly. The poor man is in want of rest and food."

"Worse and worse!" said Mrs. Darrell. "A crazy man and a divorced woman! I never wished to have anything to do with Americans. American cousins, indeed, as people in public speeches call them! I don't believe that Americans are more respectable than any other foreigners. Where is the officer?"

"Gone to Killarney to telegraph to his owners

and the Trinity House. He says the Crimea's owners will pay all reasonable expenses, and that the lady upstairs is very rich, — so *that's* all right, my love !”

Here Adela's voice was heard through the open window of her chamber, singing dreamily, —

“Safe home, safe home in port !
Rent cordage, shattered deck,
Torn sails, provisions short,
And only not a wreck !”

Colonel Wolcott flushed deeply and started to his feet, then sank down again with a sigh, and buried his face in his hands.

The Darrells were more convinced than ever that he was crazy.

“Now go, Mr. Dobson, there 's a good man,” said Mr. Darrell. “You may disturb the lady. I'll walk a little way with you down the hill. I'll go down on the wharf and find a place for you. You want a little care yourself after your shipwreck. It will do you good to see the doctor.”

“Yes, sir ; I intend to see the doctor when he comes out of your house, after his next visit to my wife,” said Colonel Wolcott ; “and I will see him *here*.”

So saying, he seated himself on a large stone outside the gate of the rectory, where for some time he remained motionless, overcome by the prolonged strain of the past week ; for this was

Wednesday, the 10th of June, six days after our narrative commenced, and not quite a week since we saw him running gayly down the steps after the Minister's ball, rejoicing in his literary success, and congratulating himself that he was free from all domestic obligations.

How much may happen in a week !

CHAPTER XIX.

IN SICKNESS.

The rainbow never shines over our hearts in all its beauty till a storm has cleared the atmosphere.

JEAN PAUL RICHTER.

ON that same day, Wednesday, the 10th of June, old Mrs. Peter Engels sat in her matted, shrouded, darkened New York house, putting away carpets, tying up camphor-bags, laying linen up in lavender, sewing furs into old pillow-slips, — “fixing things,” as she would have defined her work, for her annual flitting to her country-house on the North River.

She intended to leave the city so soon as Adela should reach home. At that season of the year the Crimea, a fine boat, though an old-fashioned one, was sure to have a swift, smooth passage. They had already read in the “Shipping News” of her departure from Queenstown. In five more days, at furthest, she would be off Sandy Hook. Eight days from land to land, even though the passage from Europe to America is proverbially

up hill, would, at that season of the year, be no unheard-of passage.

The old lady was where she best loved to be, in her own convenient store-room, when she heard her husband's step on the marble pavement of the outer entry.

The wife of a man of business dreads her husband's return home in business hours. It never portends anything but evil. He is ill; he has had bad news,—some telegram, some worry. He would never come "up town" at that hour of the day if he had good news to communicate. A pleasant surprise can "keep," and would almost certainly be deferred till the dinner-hour.

So, when Mrs. Engels heard her husband's step, as she stood among her jam-pots and napery, the heart gave a great throb in her broad, motherly bosom. She took off her white apron, and went forth prepared to meet misfortune.

Her look into her husband's face did not reassure her, and she exclaimed at once, "What's wrong with you, husband?"

The old man drew her into the breakfast-parlor, and shut the door. She put her two soft, withered hands upon his shoulders, rested her gray head against his breast, and said again, in a low voice, "Tell me quick, Peter! I see bad news is coming."

"It's Adela!" he cried. "The Crimea has

been wrecked. Broke her shaft when one day out, became unmanageable, and was run ashore somewhere on the coast of Ireland. Some of her passengers were taken off by a sailing vessel, but many have been lost. Two ladies and a child were on board of her this morning when she went ashore. I have telegraphed to know their names. The *Morea*, of the same line, sails at twelve o'clock. I have come home to put together a few things, and I think I had better go out in her. There may be some great trouble about Lance; for, Maggie, I never told you, but Deane got a cable telegram two days ago from Smith, advising him that Wolcott had found them out in Liverpool, and that he was on board the *Crimea* with Adela."

"Dear heart! dear heart!" cried Mrs. Engels, "and she had no one to protect her. Poor, poor girl! And she has always been so ready to make up with him, talking about her duty as his wife, bringing up her little boy to make a sort of hero of him, reading his book as if it were her Bible, and always thinking of him, in spite of all that's past, as any happy wife might think on her child's father."

"I gave him up as a bad bargain nine years ago; she never could have got any good of him, — a supercilious Southerner," said the old man. "But mother, I must make haste."

A loud ring at the hall-door interrupted them. Mr. Engels answered it himself, and returned, bringing a telegram.

"An answer to my question," he said.

"SAVED IN FIRST CABIN: Mrs. Wolcott, Miss Wylie, Miss Tontine, Mr. Dobson. Mrs. Wolcott at Ballinasloe, very ill."

"Husband, I must go with you."

"Be quick then."

In half an hour Mrs. Engels's maid, a woman who had lived with her for twenty years, had put a few changes of raiment in two bags, and found herself left in charge of the deserted house and several hundred thousand dollars' worth of valuables, while her master and her mistress were driving as rapidly as their fat carriage-horses would go along the wharves of New York to the Morea.

There was no fear that Peter Engels and his wife would find no state-room on a crowded steamer. For a millionaire like Mr. Engels, the captain would have given up his own cabin if necessary.

Other accommodation was, however, available, and every attention was paid to them on board; but the two poor old rich people clung only together during their sad voyage, lonely, excepting for each other's sympathy, their very wealth seeming to isolate them from the rest of the Morea's little world.

"Ah! Maggie," the old man would say to his wife, as they stood sorrowfully looking over the taffrail at the wake, which, flashing in the sunlight, seemed to mark a golden pathway back to their golden home, "it is not money, it is the home relationships that money cannot bring that make the real good in this world. The best things to be had in life are common to us all, to poor or rich alike, — health, light, air, marriage, children. Sometimes I think the Lord is punishing me for being so rich a man."

"No, Peter dear," said the old wife, "don't think hard thoughts of him. God is not so fond of *punishing* as people make him out to be. You have never wronged any man of a cent, and have always been charitable and thoughtful about others. The Lord has prospered you as he did Joseph and David and Abraham. You have been good to your wife, and to all women you have had anything to do with. I lay great stress on that, for I have always believed that *that* counts more in a man's luck than people seem to think. You have had pleasure in making money, and why should n't you? Writers have pleasure when they succeed in making books, sculptors in making their statues. We all like to do what we do well."

"Perhaps so, but maybe I ought not to be so rich. I do not know. And now I have got the

money, what good does it all do to you or me or Adela? The only thing we really cared for was our children. Our little fellows died before I grew so rich, and left us only Adela. We educated her at great expense ; we even sent her away from us to school, though it was a sacrifice, because we were told that was the right thing to be done. All our plans were for her. We would have bought her a good husband, and not have grudged his weight in gold, could that have made her happy. We did get one for her who appeared like the right thing, — fashionable, well-connected, clever, and they told us without vice ; and she was fond of him. There was absolutely nothing against him. It seemed as if we had done the very best we could for her ; and in three months all the fat was in the fire. Poor Adela ! — the nicest, dearest girl in all the world, but so different from other married women. Why, she is only six-and-twenty now, and it makes my heart ache to see how little good she has had out of her life or our money ; how she lives under a cloud, and keeps away from people, and is shy and out of place. I'd pay a million of dollars down — gold, bonds, or greenbacks — to bring her back the only man she wants, and to keep him if we could get him for her."

"It will come right, Peter, somehow, some day. Just you trust and wait, husband. Maybe

he is dead, drowned you know ; or, maybe, if he is there, at this very moment they are making it up together."

"No, there was only one male cabin passenger saved. I know the man, — an Englishman ; he travels for a dry-goods house up town. And, even if Wolcott were alive, they would never come together. It is better as it is for us and Adela. I saw enough of him to know that if he got the upper hand he would part us from her. That plan of getting them divorced did not suit Adela. Maggie, you could not have flared up quicker than she did, had I proposed to be divorced from you. Poor, dear Adela ! I'd settle a million down and never grudge it if that would bribe him to be kind to her. He's a refined, distinguished sort of fellow, and would make a good use of it ; but the worst of those Southerners is that they pride themselves on despising money, (they like to spend it though) ; and he looks down upon us all, I do believe, chiefly because we are richer than he is."

"O father, never fear ! All is bound to come right somehow," said the old wife, returning to her hopeful formula. "Married love cannot be bribed by dollars ; it does not grow out of gold-dust, but often it springs up in very poor soil. You have been a good man, and have done good all your life, and never harmed the widow

or the fatherless, or any woman, and in your old age things will be made right for you."

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At the moment when Peter Engels and his wife thus conversed on board the *Morea*, their "refined and distinguished" son-in-law was sitting in torn clothes upon a dusty rock at the gate of the Ballinasloe rectory. The sun beat hot on his head; and it is when sleepless and exhausted that the sun exerts a fatal power. It is said that no man can have sunstroke who has slept well the night before. Colonel Wolcott had not slept for two nights. He had gone through every kind of exertion, anxiety, and exposure, barely tasting food or drink, so anxious had he been to find poor Mel and to get back to Adela. He was now refused communication with his wife, — thrust out, discredited, proclaimed a cheat and an impostor; nor in his present state could he make head against this opposition.

He sat there, hardly conscious. His nervous system was so highly strung that the strings nearly snapped; and he would have been beyond all human help in half an hour.

He was roused by men talking to him and shaking him. Several persons stood around him. One was a rural policeman, one Mr. Darrell, the others Father Joe the priest, Paddy Byrne,

Mr. Wood, the only remaining officer on the Crimea, just returned from Killarney, a man, evidently a gentleman, though in a rough shooting-dress, who appeared to be looked up to by all the rest of the party, and the doctor.

The gentleman was addressing him in a tone of encouragement, but in words which did more than any other address could have done to sting and rouse him.

"Come, my man, exert yourself! Get up, and go down to the priest's house. Father Joe will be very kind to you."

There was a gleam in Colonel Wolcott's eyes, at this speech, not lost on the officer of the Crimea. Lucifer, having paid first-class fare, would be entitled to consideration not accorded to Gabriel if he berthed in the second cabin. Defaulter and thief though he might be, no officer in the Crimea, but its captain, might lose sight of this distinction. With an emphasis intended to make others sensible of their mistake, Mr. Wood addressed his first-class passenger.

"Yes, sir, his lordship is quite right. Lord Lindore knows that it is always best to be a little rough in cases of this kind. You must exert yourself. You must not sit here in the dust and sun. The owners are responsible for your comfort and accommodation. Here is the doctor. He wants to feel your pulse. And this gentle-

man is Lord Lindore, who has a castle in the neighborhood. Besides, sir, our voices are disturbing the lady," he added, as a snatch of song from Adela's room floated from the open window.

"Is the doctor here, did you say?" said Colonel Wolcott.

"Yes; here I am." Mr. Neal was a very young practitioner.

"Then, doctor, I am Colonel Wolcott. Tell me how my wife is. Will she recover?"

"The lady who is singing? If she follows my directions, I have no doubt of it, and you too. Only she must be kept quite still, and your voice disturbs her. A shipwreck puts a great strain on a lady's constitution. In a day or two you will both be all right if I am not mistaken. Only let Father Joe take you away now."

Colonel Wolcott rose to his feet but staggered.

"Gentlemen," he said, "take notice. I am Lancelot Wolcott, once colonel in the Confederate army, and author of a lately published book on Central Asia. The lady sick in that house is Mrs. Wolcott, my wife. Her father lives in New York, — Mr. Peter Engels."

There was silence for a moment. At last the doctor said, —

"I have no doubt about what you say, my dear sir, — no doubt about it whatever, but for the present, unfeeling as it may appear to you, we

must tear you and the lady apart from one another."

Colonel Wolcott feebly put his hand in his breast-pocket.

"Mr. Wood," he said to the officer, "you are a brave man; you commanded us at the pumps. I address myself to you. You may remember when that tug came off from Queenstown. I made Captain Moore aware of my identity; I showed him my passport,—the passport with which I travelled from Constantinople. But I changed my coat last night. You will find it in my state-room."

"He is not Colonel Wolcott," said Lord Lindore, in a low tone to the rector. "Colonel Wolcott is a very different-looking man,—quite bald. We have a likeness of him at the castle in the 'Illustration.'"

Colonel Wolcott caught the whisper. It filled him with a sense of utter hopelessness. He felt as a prisoner or a tramp must feel when his very identity seems taken from him.

He was about to sink back on the stone, and to refuse to hear further from the men about him, when Harrie Tontine ran down the garden-walk and seized hold of his hand.

"Mr. Dobson," she said, "you were very good to *me*, though you did let my mamma leave me. I'll let you know how Mrs. Wolcott is every day,

if you want me to. You saved her life and all our lives, and," added the precocious child, "I am very sure you are in love with her. I think it is only fair you should know how she is, if you want to, whoever you are."

Harrie's little speech produced an effect on the assembly.

"The child shall let you know every day," said Mr. Darrell.

"Yes," replied Harrie, whispering audibly. "*He*'ll let me, if Mrs. Darrell lets *him*. But whether she will or not, I'll keep my word, certain and sure. I'd like to see Mrs. Darrell stop me. I'll find a way to do anything I want. I'm an American!"

"God bless you, Harrie!" said Colonel Wolcott, offering to kiss her; but Harrie withdrew from his caress. Wild as she was, and ready to take liberties with others, she was prompt to resent any attempted to herself.

"I'll let you know twice a day," she repeated positively. With that she ran into the house, while the colonel, leaning feebly on the priest and Paddy, went slowly down the road leading to the hamlet, where, beside the chapel, stood the priest's small house, his housekeeper waiting, with a kindly welcome, at the door.

CHAPTER XX.

FOR BETTER.

In such a wife
 Fortune had lavished all her store;
 And nothing now remained in life
 But to deserve her more and more.

COVENTRY PATMORE, *The Espousal*.

THE Morea, on the eighth day of her voyage, stood into the Cove of Cork, and found herself surrounded by the green hills and white cottages of Queenstown.

A tender at once came off to her with fresh vegetables and the latest intelligence. Peter Engels was one of the first to get hold of a newspaper. In capital letters he read :—

• FURTHER PARTICULARS OF THE WRECK OF THE
 CRIMEA !

ADVICES FROM HALIFAX.

PASSENGERS TAKEN OFF BY THE ROBERT E. LEE
 TRANSFERRED TO THE BOTHNIA.

GALLANT CONDUCT OF COLONEL WOLCOTT, THE
 DISTINGUISHED TRAVELLER.

ROMANTIC INCIDENT.

MEETS ON THE CRIMEA HIS FIRST LOVE,
 A NEW YORK WIDOW,
 AND IN SAVING HER LIFE LOSES HIS OWN.

Poor Mr. Engels stood glaring at this announcement without reading the particulars, when his wife came up to him.

"Deary," she said, "Adela is still alive, though very ill. The captain tells me that a man has come on board from Ballinasloe, the place where she is, to get ice and champagne for her. He is sent by a gentleman who has been very kind to her. I think it must be that Mr. Dobson who was saved. The man called him Wolcott, but he has got the names mixed up somehow. Will you come and question him?"

She stood with her little travelling bag, ready to go ashore in the tender.

"Not Wolcott — no! He's dead. We may be thankful for that, Maggie. See how he died! Adela is rid of him at last." And he gave her the paper.

"Poor child! Poor child! So he left her to perish, at the last, that he might rescue Cora Noble! My poor, poor Adela! This will come hard to her. I know she was very fond of him, for all that's come and gone," said the mother. "Well, we ought to be thankful. I said things would come right at last. It's all over now. When people's married lives have got into such a snarl as that, it's easier to cut than disentangle. Till death do us part, you know. So Adela is a widow. I told you, Peter, all would happen

for the best. Don't you remember, dear, I said so?"

"I know, I know, you always make out things are for the best. I wish I saw them so," he said, and left her for a few moments. He soon came back, accompanied by the captain and an Irishman.

"See," said he, "what you can make of his story, Mag. He blunders so in his names. He confounds Wolcott and Dobson."

"Is the sick lady called Mrs. Wolcott?" said the old lady.

"Shure, my lady, an' that seems the lady's name. But we just calls her 'the lady.'"

"And you have been sent here to get ice for her. Who sent you?"

"It was the jantleman. Him as saved her life, an' was coortin' her an' goin' on about her, the child says, on board the steamer. Him as is married to her already, he says himself; but no one seems by rights to know how that is, because the sailors says his name is Mr. Dobson. He give me money, two five-pound notes, 'and, Paddy,' says he, 'here's a bit of a list of the things you are to ask for.' An' Mr. Wood, the third officer, he give me a note to this captain here to get ice off the Morea. I was to fetch it back for her, an' he's waitin' for the things now. He give me the list of 'em all,—

lemons, sugar, oranges, an' tam — tam — I don't know the name o' them things. But there was a basket o' wine cost more than all the rest of them. He wrote its name down. See, sir, here —

“Where does the gentleman come from?”

“Shure, it's from off the ship that is breakin' up upon the reef, an' sorrow much comfort the boys is gettin' out of her, at all, at all. He saved the lady an' the governess an' himself an' the man that was drowned on the reef an' the child an' the dog an' all of them. Day before yesterday he got a rale physician for her, from Killarney. But, bless you! he said our Mr. Neal done just as good. His rivirince's wife, though, Mrs. Darrell, won't let him come anigh her. She says she must see things all respectable about her house, and everything regular.”

“How does this gentleman look?”

“He is rale tall, fine-looking, with the biggest black beard ever your ladyship see on him, an' a pair of eyes that pierces through the very soul of you. He sings beautiful. An' ivery night he's outside of her window, an' she a singing Prodestan hymns. Mrs. Darrell wants him to be removed by the police; but he's free with his purse, an' the police does n't like exactly to be after him.”

“That can't be Wolcott. I don't believe he

would know a Protestant hymn if he heard one," exclaimed his father-in-law.

"Well, he's a Prodestan, anyhow, himself, an' was up at the church Sunday morning. Father Joe himself tould me so. Says he, 'That's the only word I have to say agin Colonel Wolcott.' He calls him Wolcott, but the rector an' his wife calls him chate an' imposture. He's been sending to Valencia an' Killarney, right an' left, telegraphing since Sunday. He's been very ill himself, but the last two days he's got a dog-cart an' been all over the counthry."

"Can it be Wolcott, Maggie?"

"Ah, but he's the jantleman, I'll go bail for him. I helped him go look for his servant on the reef. He would n't leave looking for him to the sailors, fearing they'd give up before he was dead,—an' so they would,—an' so the poor fellow that laid there dead under the rocks warnt drowned."

"Are you going back at once to the place where the wreck lies?" asked the captain of the *Morea*.

"As fast as the engine will be dhrivin' me, your honor. It's at Killarney his honor will be expectin' me with his things," was the answer.

"Then, Mr. Engels, you had better go along with him. He will put you in the way of getting

to the coast. The railroad terminates at Killarney."

"Shure, his honor will be at Killarney waitin' for me an' the lemons and the ice, — all the things I was to fetch," said the Irishman.

In a few minutes the old couple found themselves on board the Queenstown tender; and in half an hour, with ice, champagne, lemons, tamarinds, etc., they were rushing across Ireland, no travellers ever paying less attention than they did to the scenery and characteristics of the Emerald Isle.

At Killarney there was the usual Irish rush of carmen, guides, gossoons, beggars, and hotel runners. It was the harvest season of the place. No child so small, no man so poor, but crowded to glean after the chief reapers.

Paddy shoved the crowd off from the strangers, crying aloud to some one in torn trousers and a long beard, "Shure, I've brought your honor all you named upon the list, an' an owld lady an' owld jantleman, all the way from Ameriky, to see the lady."

"Mr. Engels! Mrs. Engels! How unexpected," said the figure, advancing towards them, "and how glad I am to see you!"

"Colonel Wolcott! Bless me! Then you were not drowned. But what — how is Adela?"

"Better. She has recovered her senses, but I

am not allowed to see her. Things may change now that you have come. Mrs. Engels, take pity on us both and let me see her! But first tell me about that Indiana business. Is she my wife still? Deane has not answered a telegram I sent him yesterday morning."

"I left word not to go on in the case until we heard from you again," said Mr. Engels. "But about seeing her, we can say nothing till we know what she wishes. She herself must decide for or against that. How can we get on as quick as possible?"

"I have a dog-cart here and a pair of fast ponies. I will put you there in about two hours. Paddy, don't put those things into the dog-cart; hire a car. The sight of her father and mother will do Mrs. Wolcott more good than ice or champagne."

In a few minutes they were *en route*. Colonel Wolcott, in high spirits, drove fast along roads rough as the well-known limestone roads in the Valley of Virginia; but though he drove fast, he contrived to talk fast too, and gave his listeners full particulars of the wreck of the Crimea.

"How about the Robert E. Lee?" said Mr. Engels. "I saw a report from Halifax that you had lost your life saving a New York widow."

"When Adela is well enough you must ask her about that," said Colonel Wolcott, with a

laugh ; and his laugh seemed to remove the need of further explanation.

Before long they were all laughing. There may be laughing-gas in the Irish atmosphere ; but put three people together who have honest hearts and kindly dispositions, exhilarate them with a new hope after a long anxiety, shake them up in a rough drive of ten miles over a bad road in a strange country, and see if they will not, without formal explanation, come to a good understanding with each other. Indeed, explanations are apt at any time to be the new cloth in the old fabric of a quarrel.

For the first time Colonel Wolcott did not see in Mr. Engels a rich vulgarian. For the first time he appreciated the motherly heart of his unpolished mother-in-law. For the first time, too, the old people saw in him neither "the good match" they had purchased for their daughter, nor the hot-blooded Southerner who had broken away from them, despising their breeding and renouncing their connection.

When the dog-cart drew up at the garden-gate of the rectory, Mrs. Darrell hastened from her chamber, astonished to see her adversary spring from the box-seat, and hand out an old lady.

"I am Mrs. Engels, Mrs. Wolcott's mother, ma'am," said that person. "You have been very good to her, I hear, and I thank you with all my

heart. Will you show me the way to my daughter?"

"Excuse me, madam. Arriving in company with a person I have reason to know is a cheat and an impostor —"

"Not at all, madam. He is my daughter's husband. Please stand aside and let me find her room."

This coolness in the hall of her own house discomfited Mrs. Darrell. Like every other bully, she was a coward.

At this moment Harrie Tontine rushed down stairs with a shout:—

"Good gracious! If here is n't Mrs. Engels!"

And a few moments after, when Mrs. Darrell entered Mrs. Wolcott's room, all her suspicions vanished at the sight before her.

The patient was sitting up in bed clasped to her mother's heart, with sobs of "O mother, mother, this is too much happiness! Now you will let me see Lancelot. I keep hearing his voice downstairs, but they won't let him come up. Where is papa? How could you get here so soon?"

"Colonel Wolcott," called out Mrs. Engels, going at once to the head of the stairs, "come up at once, please! Your wife wants you."

At the same moment she turned warningly to Adela, who, with flushed cheeks, exclaimed, "I'll

not excite myself. I will be very calm. This listening and hoping and worrying has been worse for me than seeing him could be. O Lancelot, Lancelot, is it really you?"

A few hours later, in consequence of Colonel Wolcott's telegrams, all manner of identifications began to pour in. The first person who arrived to help him out of his scrape was the American Secretary of Legation from London. There was no suitable accommodation for him in the village, so he threw himself upon the hospitality of Lord Lindore, with whom he had some acquaintance, and who, in vexed repentance for his former blunder, now lavished every possible attention on Adela and the pseudo "Mr. Dobson."

Next day came Mr. Smith, escorting little Lance, who, his father and grandmother being absorbed in Adela, was handed over to his grandfather's care; and the pair, being warmly pressed, also took up their quarters at Castle Lindore.

Emma Wylie, though superseded in her functions as a nurse, was not trusted to take care of Lance, because his mother and grandmother alike dreaded any association between him and the daughter of Cora Tontine.

Harrie was now possessed with a mania for the reef. To go off to the wreck was her supreme delight. She had recovered her spirits, and

made a slave of the third officer. Old Mrs. Engels encouraged their intimacy, to the disgust of Mrs. Darrell, who was lost in astonishment at this specimen of American childhood.

Harrie had keen perceptions. The tact which is usually employed to please was by her used to repel, — like the reverse end of a magnet. She knew to a nicety what would shock, estrange, worry, and confound the rector's lady.

Where Harrie went, even upon the reef, Mrs. Engels insisted that Miss Wylie should accompany her; and the old lady smiled complacently when, one evening, Colonel Wolcott announced that he thought he had made a discovery. He fancied that the third officer was paying attentions to Miss Wylie.

"Ha! ha!" said his mother-in-law. "Did you suppose he would let Harrie cut up in that way and torment him if it were not for that — you know?"

"My good mother," said Colonel Wolcott, "I thought you had forsworn match-making."

"Match-making, yes. Bringing two people together who would suit each other, no. Mr. Wood and Miss Wylie can, of course, do as they like; and I don't know as she will have him when he asks her. But, at any rate, she never had an offer in her life before, and she will have one now. That will be good for her, if nothing more

comes of it ; it will be something to look back upon if she elects to be an old maid. Every woman has a right to one offer, at least. A girl who misses her fair share of experience with men, is always restless and unhappy."

"And the third officer?"

"He is a man and a sailor. Mr. Engels will look after him, and get him some good berth which will make it up to him if he fails ; but he *won't* fail, I'm pretty sure."

CHAPTER XXI.

FOR RICHER.

There may be men, perhaps, whose vocation it is to be idle,
Idle, sumptuous even, luxurious if it must be.
Only let each man seek to be that for which nature designed him,
Do his duty in that state of life to which God, not man, shall call him.
Let us to Providence trust, and abide and work in our stations.

A. H. CLOUGH, *The Bothie of Toper-na-Fuosich.*

AS days went on, and Adela grew stronger, questions of the future had to be decided. When her husband first saw her dressed he exclaimed against her black clothes.

"Who are you wearing this ill-timed black for, Adela?"

"For my good aunt, Mrs. Carr, who left me, when she died, \$200,000."

The next day he said to her, "Adela, you have \$200,000. Let us live upon your income till I get something to do."

"What's that you say?" said Peter Engels.

"My dear sir, that I am a poor man with a rich wife. I think Adela, Lancey, and I may well live for the present on the income of \$200,000."

"Listen to me, son Lancelot, and, if you can, divest yourself of Southern sensitiveness and come down to Northern sense. It has pleased the Lord to make you rich by marriage. In a pecuniary sense, you have married Adela for *better*, not for *worse*. Have you any right to shirk the obligations of your marriage?"

"Of course not. I acknowledge *that* by this time. But —"

"I have been wanting to have a little talk with you upon this subject. My Maggie and I are going home in the next steamer."

"No, no!" cried Adela; and her protest was echoed by an energetic "No!" from her husband.

"Yes," said the old gentleman, smiling, "and you are to go off alone and have your honeymoon. Make it last a year, if you like. It may be your life's best holiday. Meantime I shall be looking out in New York for a house for you. You must have your own establishment, and be master in your own house, Colonel. We made a mistake about that last time."

"Don't say that," said Lancelot, "when I have just learned to value you and Mrs. Engels."

"For all that, we will have two households," said Mr. Engels. "Now as to money. It is much easier to make it than to keep it, to accumulate it than to spend it. One reason that so

few fortunes in America grow *very* great, while so many make money, is that twenty men lose what they make to one who accumulates it. Men slave and toil, and rake and scrape, and then they make ignorant investments, and off it goes. It has been my pleasure to make money and my pride to keep it. *Now* I want you and Adela and Lance to do me credit by your way of spending it. The luck of having their means well spent happens to few men like me. When I first came under religious convictions — that time my little boys died — it was a matter of conscientious consideration with me whether I ought not to educate myself and go into the ministry. I came to the conclusion that I had better not. ‘Peter Engels,’ I said, ‘you are too old to make much of a preacher, but you can make money. Stay where the Lord has found you, and always keep a promising young man educating at your expense as a clergyman or a missionary.’ I always have. And one of them rushed at me and roared about my consenting to this divorce like a bull of Bashan.”

“Don’t talk about that, please, papa,” said Adela. “It is all over.”

“Well, he allowed I was ignorant,” said her father, “and he said the church ought to have educated me better. Pretty good, that, was n’t it, Colonel? when I’d paid for all he knew.

However, as I was saying, our country has great need of wealth, and she wants a great deal that wealth can buy for her improvement, or so they say. She wants rich men and women who know how to spend. I don't. But you may learn. One of the misfortunes of rich men in America is that they are so busy in getting wealth that it leaves them no time to get acquainted with their sons and daughters. As a rule, our rich men have turned out a poor lot of sons. Now, my Adela would do credit to a kingdom, — and I think you are a right good fellow. I want you both to do what a man brought up as I have been cannot do for himself; that is, judiciously and advantageously to spend my money. The country wants art. Study art, and patronize it for me. The country, they say, has not enough refined society. Open your doors, and show society how the thing ought to be done. As to direct charity, it requires an education made up of blunders and disappointments to teach us all who to help and who to refuse. One has to spend a fortune making mischief only to find out that money is capable of doing harm. Charity with you and Adela won't consist, I hope, merely in giving away money, — I can supply you with that; — you must give the subject your attention and your time. You have no easy task before you. It is a profession to be rich. Go off and enjoy your-

selves, and then come back and take up your work in your own country as the husband of a very rich wife, — the heir, most probably, in a few years of a very rich man.”

Mr. Engels's voice quavered a little as he uttered the last words. Colonel Wolcott heard him in silence, but he acquiesced. He had lived to discover for himself that to be rich is a profession, — a profession without primers or professorships, without landmarks or traditions; in which the blind lead the blind, and in which a man is educated only by his own mistakes.

As his esteem for his father-in-law increased, he became sensible that other men did him a justice which he himself had withheld. A reflected light often shows points which had escaped our observation.

Mr. Engels was something of an agriculturist and a good judge of horses. He made a favorable impression on the gentlemen of Ballinasloe and its neighborhood. These were not disposed to be hypercritical on small points of refinement, as had once been the case with his son-in-law.

Colonel Wolcott excused himself from the hospitalities offered him. He was too truly a gentleman to feel resentment at his first reception in the neighborhood, but his whole heart was with his wife, his sole interest in her recovery.

Two or three days later came a letter from Mr. Deane, dated June 6, which had been lying a fortnight in the hands of the London publisher.

“NEW YORK, June 6, 1870.

“MY DEAR COLONEL, — I have employed Mr. Ovid O’Peccan as your counsel in Indiana; but am sorry to say suit will not be brought until court meets in September. I also regret to tell you that we shall not have the co-operation of Mrs. Wolcott and her family. Mr. Engels positively declines to assist us or to enter into any compromise. Mrs. Wolcott takes the position that you went South to attend to your affairs, and does not consider herself deserted by you. It remains, therefore, to get up a case against her. We should be glad to receive fuller information as to your marriage difficulties, and further instructions. Anything which may tell against the defendant will be valuable.

“Your obedient servant,

“RICHARD DEANE.”

Colonel Wolcott, who was now a resident at the rectory, went into the library to answer this letter.

“BALLINASLOE RECTORY, June 26, 1870.

“MY DEAR SIR, — Your letter of June 6 did not reach me until this morning. On the very

day it is dated, things were settling themselves another way. All is well that ends well. I am with Mrs. Wolcott at Ballinasloe, a small village on the western coast of Ireland, where the poor Crimea's skeleton lies on a reef opposite the windows of the house where we are staying. Mrs. Wolcott is slowly recovering from the exposure and excitement of the shipwreck. Mr. and Mrs. Engels are here, and our little boy. All this being so, there is no need to send you the information you requested. Please pay Mr. O'Peccan, and let me never again hear the word divorce, — or see the bills. You can draw for the full amount on my publishers, A. B. & Co., who will have orders to honor your check as soon as it comes to hand.

“Yours truly,

“LANCELOT WOLCOTT.”

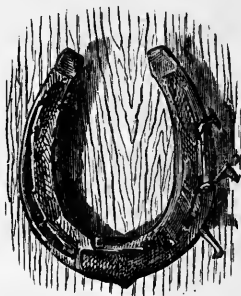
Adela entered while still he sat, his pen suspended over the last word.

“What is it?” she asked, noticing his sombre expression.

“Only this letter,” he replied, pushing it toward her. “What a fool I have been, dear love, what a fool!”

“Never say so again,” she replied, looking deep into his eyes with that ineffable gaze of steadfast affection which makes a wife's face seem half

divine to her husband. "Never think so again, dear Lancelot. Both of us did wrong, both are forgiven, and for the future we are going to be such happy people, and so wise, that the world will be all the better because we live in it and because we love one another."



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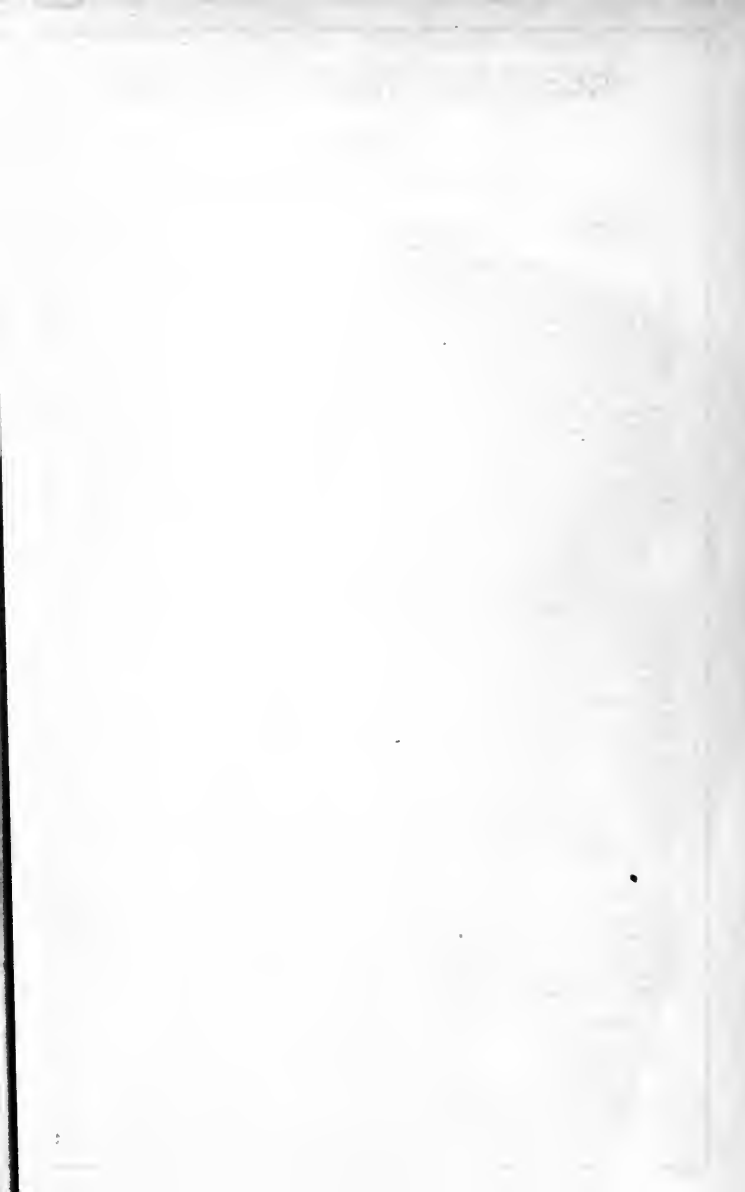
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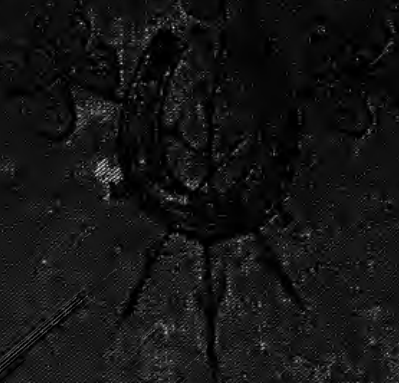
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